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THE

CHRISTIAN PIONEER:

INTENDED TO UPHOLD

THE GREAT DOCTRINES

OF

THE REFORMATION;

THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE,

THE RIGHT OF INDIVIDUAL JUDGMENT,

AND OF FEARLESS FREE INQUIRY.

“Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.—JESUS.

“The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.”—PAUL.

VOL. VII.

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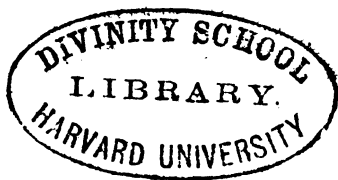
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THE

CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

No. 73. SEPTEMBER, 1832. Vol. VII.

Scottish Unitarian Christian Association.

THE Second Anniversary of this Society was held at Glasgow, on Sunday and Monday, July 22d and 23d. Illness prevented the attendance of many individuals from various places; but friends were present from Edinburgh, Dundee, Lanark, Paisley, Greenock, Dumbarton, Renfrew, Port-Glasgow, &c. On Sunday morning, the Rev. H. Montgomery of Belfast, conducted the worship, and preached a most powerful, eloquent, and argumentative discourse, which deeply interested and impressed a very large congregation, from Eph. iv. 1-3. In this sermon, the evils resulting from the attempt to enforce uniformity in matters of faith, were most forcibly delineated. Ireland, in her episcopal establishment—in her presbyterian inquisition—illustrated those evils most fearfully. In both these instances, in every attempt to establish uniformity of faith, the unity of the spirit of Christianity has been grossly violated. That unity could not be one of thought, but of feeling; individual minds would differ, but every heart might be at one in the diffusion of knowledge—in the practice of charity. Uniformity of faith could only exist in profession, not in principle; it was the source of hypocrisy, the enemy of honesty, and its fruits were time-servingness and indifference—ignorance and servility. Surely no one could hear that sermon, without resolving that he would henceforth “afford to keep a conscience.”

In the afternoon, the Rev. B. T. Stannus of Edinburgh led the devotions, and delivered an eloquent illustration of the wanderings of Christendom from the Great Father of all, and on the gradual adoption of repentant feelings for their alienation from the pure worship of the One God, and on the progress of Christian righteousness and truth, founded on the words, using them as a motto merely, Luke xv. 18, “I will arise and go to my Father.” The Chapel was crowded.

Between the afternoon and evening worship, many of the friends from the country, joined by several of the Glas-

gow congregation, and the ministers, drank tea together. Mr. Montgomery again preached in the evening, showing the blessings of knowledge—blessings which had not been bestowed on mankind either by civil governments or established churches.

On Monday afternoon at three o'clock, a Public Meeting was held in the Chapel. It was well attended. The Rev. W. Smith of Dundee having constituted the meeting by prayer, it was moved by Mr. Peter, and seconded by Mr. Bryson of Glasgow, that Dr. Anderson of Edinburgh be respectfully requested to act as Chairman. On taking the Chair, Dr. Anderson delivered the following address:—

“ My Christian Friends,

“ It is not necessary that I should take up the time of this meeting by any lengthened detail of its object, as this will be sufficiently done by the Report of the Committee about to be read, and by the Resolutions founded on it. I cannot, however, allow the opportunity afforded to me by the situation which, through your kindness, I now occupy, to pass, without congratulating those who are here assembled on the cheering prospect of that cause for the promotion of which we have associated ourselves together. In doing so, it is not from anything we have yet accomplished that I derive the encouraging hope, that our principles must ere long attract that attention which is alone wanted to ensure their success (though, even in this respect, we have no small cause for congratulation); neither is it in the truth or vast importance of our cause, abstractly considered, that I place my reliance; but it is to the signs of the times, as indicative of a change about to take place in the time-hallowed opinions of mankind on subjects of the highest interest and importance. That truth is great, and must ultimately prevail over error, no lover of the truth could ever doubt; but though the truths of Christianity have now been in the world for nearly two thousand years, to how small an extent, alas, have they yet spread, and how much narrower still the limits within which their genuine influence has been felt! Shall it be said, then, that the mission of Jesus Christ, commissioned of God to make known his will to mankind, has proved to be in any respect a failure, or that it has not accomplished the good for which it was intended? Certainly not; for into whatever country his religion has been carried, there do we mark the commencement of civilization; and, corrupted though it may have been, its development has displayed the gracious designs of that Providence which adapts itself to the wants of mankind in the rudest no less than in the more advanced stages of society. So far am I from regarding the successive changes which the Christian system has undergone, as any objection to its divine origin, that I consider it derives an additional claim on our attention in having adapted itself to an infant state of society; while the sublimity of its truths are alike fitted to exalt the character of man in his most advanced

state of civilization. Pure as was the light which emanated from the Saviour, it was destined to be obscured for a time by that mist which for ages darkened the intellectual atmosphere; but even in these days of moral blindness, the power of the gospel sun never was extinguished. Its blessed light and heat has already dissipated much of the darkness that prevailed, and encourages us to hope that the earth may soon be blessed by the rays of its meridian splendour. Again, I say, we are to look to the spirit of the times for that change in men's minds which must be the precursor of a purer faith than has ever yet animated the Christian world. But before we can expect to plant with success those principles from which we expect to gather the fruits of genuine Christianity, it is necessary that the soil from which they are to spring should first be cultivated; and, in this respect, what age of the world ever presented a more glorious spectacle than the present time? Corruption at home nods to its centre, while on every side we are cheered by the progress of education and civilization, in their march over the face of the world; and where tyranny and despotism would fain erect their standards, even there the friends of liberty are encouraged, by witnessing efforts which, if not in every case crowned with success, give evidence at least that there exists a deep-seated power, which, as it gathers strength, will be equal to the overthrow of every oppression, and the emancipation of the whole human family. Kings and priests, forgetful of what belong to their stations, have too long lorded their authority over men's minds, and despoiled the sacred temple of conscience. Forgetful that they are the ministers of the people, and that the power which has been conceded to them for the general good, may be again withdrawn when felt to be abused, they have fortified themselves with bulwarks which now begin to crumble by their own weight, and the fall of which must for ever crush the power by which they have been raised. It is, my friends, our peculiar privilege, that, as a Christian body, we acknowledge conscience as the only authority in matters of faith—'that we have but one master, even Christ, and that all we are brethren.' The precepts of Jesus we receive as that living bread which came down from Heaven, and that book, on whose pages are stamped the character of an authenticated revelation, we would prize as the best gift of God to man.

"That a church, so little exclusive in its character, should be the object of angry persecution and bitter invective, does certainly appear extraordinary; and the more so, as there does not exist in the creed of the Unitarian, a single proposition, to which the adherents of every other sect and party can refuse their assent. That God is one, and that he is the Father of all his creatures, and that Christ was his commissioned messenger, to make his will known unto mankind, and that conformity to his commandments must be the grounds of our acceptance with him, are the great principles of the Unitarian's creed; but as these articles are in themselves unexceptionable, our opponents find it easier to assail our system, not for what it is, but for what it is not. Instead of defining a Unitarian to be a worshipper of One God in one per-

son, he is stigmatised as an enemy to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity! When he represents the tender mercy of God as the Universal Parent, extending itself to his disobedient children, he is represented as one who would confound vice with virtue, and incurs the guilt of offering an insult to the purity of God's holiness, which it is conceived, can only be vindicated by the everlasting exclusion of the great bulk of his children from his presence; and thus it is with the other dogmas of self-styled orthodoxy. That our opponents should assume this mode of argument, is not to be wondered at; since, by doing so, they can enlist against us all the prejudices of early education, and represent our object to be, the undermining of all the essentials of the Christian faith!

"To meet these objections, my friends, let us study the example of him who never returned raillery for raillery, and who, when he was reviled, reviled not again. Let us endeavour to show to the world what our opinions really are, by the fruits which they are capable of producing; and the angry passions of mankind will in vain be lifted against us. Our situation is at present similar, in many respects, to that of the primitive church. Our numbers are comparatively small, bigotry is directed against us, our name is evil-spoken of; and though now protected in the enjoyment of our worship, we cannot but feel we thereby expose ourselves to the harsh judgments of those, who, from ignorance or a less excuseable cause, misrepresent our sentiments and intentions. Like the first Christians, then, let us disarm our adversaries, by cultivating that charity and love, which made their enemies exclaim, 'see these Christians, how they love one another;' and taking for our guide, the principles so admirably developed yesterday, in the discourse of our greatly respected visitor and friend, let us, united in the bond of Christian charity, endeavour to cultivate unity of spirit in the bond of peace."

Mr. Harris read the Report of the Committee of the Association for the past year. It was as follows:—

"It is with mingled feelings of gratitude and sorrow that the Committee, in resigning the trust committed to them, present the Report of their proceedings during the past year to the members of the Association. It is one of the pleasing features of the institution, that it bands together the scattered and isolated individuals whose minds have pierced the veil of prejudice in which the instructions of childhood and the institutions of society had involved them; that it brings into union and co-operation from various parts of their common country, those who otherwise probably would not have known each other; that friendships are thus formed, lasting and beneficent; and that once a-year at least, a solemn, combined, and public testimony is borne to the conscientious convictions of their minds to liberty, virtue, Christian truth, the unrivalled supremacy and boundless benevolence of an Almighty Father. The

sorrow, however, is not small, when those who have aided in a common cause, and have devoted themselves to truth and duty, no longer take their wonted place in the assembly of their brethren—when their seat is empty, when their labours on earth are ended, and their voice is no more heard, or their exhortations read, encouraging the advocates of an unpopular faith to persevere in well-doing. That sorrow, again, is mitigated, when, as in the case of several valued friends and correspondents of the Association, in various places, who have been called away since the last Anniversary, their devotion to truth and duty is remembered, their firm reliance on God as a Father, and the comfort they derived from the hope of the Christian, is known. In the spirit of the religion which teaches its disciples to weep with those who weep, the sympathy of the Association, the Committee are persuaded, is with the bereaved mourners. And warmest gratitude would the Committee express, to the Father of Mercies and God of all consolation, that they themselves have been permitted, amidst the vicissitudes of the world's pilgrimage, and the unusual mortality which has been prevalent, once again to meet their friends and brethren, and to rejoice with them in any portion of success which may have attended their labours, and earnestly to deliberate as to plans of usefulness for the future.

“The Committee, however, cannot proceed to the detail of the more especial business of the Association, without congratulating their friends on the result of the eventful struggle which has distinguished their common country since their last Annual Meeting. They regard that struggle as of incalculable advantage to the interests of truth and of humanity. Principles and powers have thereby been developed, whose practical application opens up a heart-cheering prospect of political, moral, and religious improvement. Any thing, almost, is preferable to stagnation. When the affections are withered by grovelling selfishness, and the intellect is overborne by slavish deference to power—when to differ in opinion is a crime, and the call to liberty is accounted sedition, it is impossible for the freedman of Christ Jesus to hope for the speedy reformation of abuses, or the extirpation of time-hallowed error. In the most favourable circumstances, the eradication of evil and the inculcation of truth is an arduous and difficult undertaking. Honourable is it to the characters

of those who preceded in the holy effort of assailing spiritual wickedness in the high places, and bright is the testimony they bore to the practical value of the principles they professed—that they quailed not in the work of duty, though the crowd and the court were equally against them—though penal statutes frowned on their efforts, and confiscation and the dungeon were the penalty of their adherence to truth and God. They laboured, and we have entered into their labours. They saw this day and they were glad. They cast their bread upon the waters, their confidence in God as the Father of all mankind assuring them, that it would be found after many days. And found it has been. It is a proof that duty should ever be performed, at all hazards and in all circumstances, whether of peril or of peace, and, under the guiding providence of a benevolent Creator, the result must be the improvement and happiness of the world. The collision of opinion will elicit truth, freedom of thought on one point will generate inquiry and liberality on all, man will be improved, Christian purity will alone satisfy the longings of his awakened spirit, truth will have free course, and God will be glorified.

“The Committee, in carrying into effect the first object of the Association, ‘to promote and keep up an intercourse and correspondence between the different individuals and societies in Scotland, united in the belief and advocacy of the great and Christian principles of the strict unity of God, and of his universal love to his creatures,’ have held various communications with the societies and individuals mentioned in the Report of last year. Their correspondent at Stranraer, whose company they had hoped to have enjoyed on the present occasion, is no more. The correspondents at Kilsyth and Kilbride have removed from those places, and are now members of the congregation at Glasgow; but those at

Aberdeen,	Blackford,	Lanark,
Auchterarder,	Falkirk,	Old Cumnock,
Tillicoultry,	Carlisle,	Renfrew,
Edinburgh,	Kilmarnock,	Bellshill,
Kirkfieldbank,	Port-Glasgow,	Monkland,
Dalmellington,	Saltcoats,	Perth,
Greenock,	Dumbarton,	Dalry,
Paisley,	Newburgh,	Beith,
Kilwinning,	Dumblane,	Irvine,
Dundee,	Grahamston,	

still remain, and letters from most of them will be introduced in the course of this Report. In addition to these, correspondence has been commenced with Catrine, Whitehill, Patna, Garron Water, Bannockburn; and individuals friendly to the principles of the Association have been ascertained to reside at Newbeth, Stirling, and Galashiels, with whom communication will as speedily as possible be opened.

“ More has been done during the last year towards carrying into effect the second object of the Association, ‘ to contribute to the illustration and establishment of the doctrines and spirit of Christianity, by the distribution of tracts on Christian doctrine and moral conduct,’ than could possibly be accomplished in the year preceding. The stock in hand at the last Anniversary was 552 books and tracts, and their value £11 : 3 : 4. Two valuable donations have been made to the Association during this year, by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, the one of 351 works, value £5, and the other of 101 works, value £6 : 6 : 8. Books and tracts, also, to the number of 187, and value £9 : 19 : 7, have been ordered from various individuals for the use of subscribers and purchasers. The account of the Thousand Unitarian Churches of America of the denomination of ‘ Christians,’ written by the Rev. Simon Clough of New-York, one of their most eloquent and indefatigable pastors—a denomination which sprung up simultaneously from the various religious parties of that mighty Union, composed of men disgusted with the contracted spirit of sectarianism, and longing for a faith more worthy of freemen, and who found that rest to their souls in the elevating doctrines, that there is but one God the Father, and that man is his beloved child, the creature of his love, created in his image, and destined for immortal blessedness, this tract appeared to be so admirably adapted to excite the attention of the people of Scotland, and to call forth further inquiry, that an edition of it was printed, consisting of 900 copies, at the cost of £3 : 7 : 3, and sent for sale to the various correspondents of the Association. There have, therefore, been in the possession of the Association during the past year, 2101 books and tracts, value £35 : 16 : 10. Of these, there have been claimed by the subscribers 59; there have been sent for circulation amongst the friends at the places before named, and to be lent out to all desirous of learning the nature of the prin-

ciples of Christian Unitarianism, 432; there have been distributed by the Secretary, 13 copies, and by the Missionary, 36 copies. There have been sold 419 copies, making a total of claimed, distributed, and sold, of 959, and leaving on hand of various books and tracts 517, value £9 : 5 : 4, and 625 copies of the pamphlet on the 'Christians of America,' value £3 : 18 : 1½.

"In accordance with the unanimous and earnest wish of the last Annual Meeting, 'that so desirable a measure as the engagement of an individual qualified for the arduous and honourable office of Missionary, may be speedily and permanently effected,' the Committee set themselves to carry that wish into execution, and thereby advance the third object of the Association, 'to assist in defraying the travelling expenses of Unitarian Missionaries in Scotland.' The Rev. Henry Clarke, in compliance with the request of the Committee, during a visit of ten weeks, preached at Carlisle, Lanark, Paisley, and Tillicoultry; and also opened Unitarian worship at Kilmarnock. The friends in those places having expressed their warm and unanimous approval of his services, and their cordial wishes that he might be induced to settle amongst them, and having accompanied that wish with promises of £50 towards his salary, the Committee, conceiving that £25 additional could be realized from the Society's funds, from the number of persons at that period subscribers to the Association, and in the hope that the British & Foreign Unitarian Association, as well as several Fellowship Funds in England, would aid them in so important a measure, transmitted an unanimous invitation to Mr. Clarke to undertake the office of Missionary to the Society, pledging the Association for one year to the salary of one hundred pounds, at the same time expressing their conviction, that the sum offered was inadequate to the labour, to Mr. Clarke's deserts, and assuredly to their wishes. Happy were the Committee, that, notwithstanding the smallness of the salary, Mr. Clarke accepted the invitation, and entered on the arduous office on the second Sunday of March. They congratulate their friends and brethren, that his valuable services have been secured; they regard his accession as most important to the interests of their cause. Five months have scarcely elapsed, and part of that period Mr. Clarke was incapacitated, by an accident, from pursuing his public duty, and consequently any great results cannot reasonably be expected

to have yet followed from his labours at the various stations. The eradication of error and the building up of truth is no holiday task; it can only be the effect of unwearied and persevering labour. Truth, indeed, is mighty; but it can only manifest its might through human agencies, and by their combined efforts it will ultimately triumph; the physical force of Samson is not applicable to the removal of intellectual prejudices and moral corruption. The Committee would therefore specially guard themselves and their friends from the indulgence of unreasonable expectations of success, and the various societies engaged in this effort from being discouraged by occasional reverses. The great measure of national regeneration, which has now happily become the law of the land, has occupied the almost ceaseless discussion of two years and five months, before a compliance with its provisions could be wrested from unwilling power. How many months and years of combined, and zealous, and devoted labour must be given to root out the prejudices which the nurse and the priest have taught, which have been confirmed by family connections and worldly fashions, and in defence of which, every art and every menace will be wielded. As far, however, as the experiment has been tried, it has fully realized the anticipations of the Committee. A hearing has been obtained in many quarters—the good seed has been sown—and many a mind and heart, they doubt not, will in due season manifest its life-giving and soul-sustaining fruit. The Missionary's Report will be read in the course of the proceedings.

“Application for aid in carrying the Mission into effect was made to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, and to various Fellowship Funds. The first-named Society regretted that, from the low state of their finances, and their being pledged to engage in a Mission to the poor, as soon as an individual properly qualified could be found to undertake its duties, they were unable at present to advance the object, excepting by donations of books. The Liverpool Fellowship Fund have kindly sent £5, and it is hoped others may likewise contribute.”*

“Several calls have been made on the Committee, to carry into effect the fourth object of the Association, ‘to

* Since the Report was drawn up, £5 have been voted by the Fellowship Fund of the Gravel Pit Congregation, Hackney. Grateful are the Committee for this aid.

support Public Worship, by assisting individuals to form themselves into Societies for the worship of the One living and true God, the Father, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,' and in the case of Kilmarnock, they are rejoiced to say, it has been accomplished. Following up the visit of Mr. Clarke, the Secretary preached to a very large audience on a week-night in February, and had much conversation with the friends, on the prospect of forming a Unitarian congregation in that town. At their request he drew up a few Rules constituting the Society, which were adopted; several families and individuals have united, and regular meetings have since been held, the Missionary preaching there occasionally. These efforts have, as might be expected, excited the zeal and intolerance of the advocates of the established and common theology; and if denunciation and misrepresentation could put down Christian Unitarianism, they would be successful. They *have* had the effect of frightening many from the exercise of that right in which Protestants once gloried, and taunted their Catholic opponents for not possessing—the right of free inquiry—the exercise of individual interpretation of Scripture. But this surrender of conscience to earthly dictation and church imposition can only be temporary. The mind cannot always be held in trammels; and if the waters of bigotry be troubled, the people will eventually be healed.

“ Other applications have been made for assistance, particularly from Aberdeen, with which the Committee were sorry they could not comply. They much regretted that in a city, containing so large a population, so important as a seat of learning, and where the prospect of at least obtaining a hearing appeared so promising, there could not at once be commenced the preaching of the glad sounds of Christian liberty, God's benevolence, and man's salvation. But they were obliged to consult their *funds* rather than their *wishes*, and these were not thought to warrant the expenditure. The remedy is with the members and friends of the Association, and the Committee trust that remedy will be applied. They hope that the future Committee will be enabled to sanction and carry into execution so desirable a measure, and that before the next Anniversary, Christian Unitarianism will have been proclaimed, not in Aberdeen alone, but that in Perth and Stirling, and other places likewise, the attention of the people will have been

directed to the great truths of a religion freed from creed corruption, and undefiled by a connection with earthly power. Important, indeed, would it be, because productive of incalculable good, since Scotland is to lose the personal services of the Rev. William Smith of Dundee, and sincerely do the Committee regret to announce the fact. Happy be his future lot! honourable and useful, his conduct in this country has given presage that it will be—important would it be, could a well-qualified person be induced to take that town as the centre of a Missionary circuit, preaching there and at Aberdeen and Perth, making occasional exchanges with the various Ministers of the denomination, and they also with each other, thus combining varied talent in the promotion of liberty and truth—measures these which could not fail to direct greater attention to the sacred principles they are labouring to diffuse. But here, again, that lion in the path, the finances of the Institution, impedes the accomplishment of these important suggestions. It is not, however, an invincible obstacle, and the Committee are persuaded that, like other evils, it also will be removed out of the way.

“ ‘ To co-operate with other Associations of a similar nature, formed in different parts of the United Kingdom and of the world, in the advancement of the holy and benevolent faith in which they are united,’ is the fifth object of the Institution, and letters containing the Resolutions of the last Anniversary, in relation to this object, have been addressed to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, the Irish Unitarian Christian Society, the American Unitarian Association, the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, and the Fellowship Funds of Liverpool, Manchester, Hackney, Finsbury, Norwich, and Sheffield. Two of these Societies have acknowledged the Resolutions, and united their friendly aid to the efforts of this Association. At its late Annual Meeting in London, on the 13th June, the British and Foreign Unitarian Association have called on the Unitarians of Scotland, as well as those of Ireland and England, to join their exertions in diffusing the principles of their common faith through foreign lands; and the Secretary of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society has communicated the following document, which marks the reciprocal feeling which animates the members of that Institution.

“ At the Second Anniversary of the Irish Unitarian

Christian Society, held in Dublin, April 29, Joseph Hone, Esq. in the Chair, it was unanimously resolved,—

“ That we cordially extend to the Scottish Unitarian Christian Association, the same measure of fraternal sympathy which its members have manifested towards us, and deem ourselves favoured in the opportunity of expressing that sympathy to its enlightened and eloquent Secretary, Rev. George Harris; that we regard his efforts, and those of the Institution with which he is connected, as instruments of Providence for imparting to the people of Scotland, a form of Christianity worthy of their reflecting and conscientious character; and that we anticipate a time, neither distant nor doubtful, when, by a succession of such powerful agencies, the soul of the Covenanters shall awake once more, and, with spirit softened and intrepidity refreshed by its sleep of ages, proclaim the glad tidings of a new reformation, and carry through the land the bloodless triumphs of the law of truth and love, over error, intolerance, and gloom.’

“ The following letter from the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster has also been received:—

‘ BANBRIDGE, IRELAND, 19th July, 1832.

‘ Rev. and Dear Sir,

‘ The Resolution of the Scottish Unitarian Association, respecting the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster and their Moderator, the Rev. Fletcher Blakely, passed at the last Annual Meeting of that Association, was this day laid before the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster; and I am desired to express to you and the Society, in whose name you write, the best thanks of my brethren for your and their kind sympathies. They are exceedingly anxious to cultivate a friendly intercourse with the Unitarian Christians of Scotland, and their constant prayer shall be, that pure and undefiled religion—that peace, charity, and religious liberty, shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the channels of the great deep.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

JAMES DAVIS,

Moderator of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster.’

“ The Committee gladly solicit the attention of the members and friends of the Association, to the report of their Missionary, as well as to the letters from the various individuals and societies in connection with the Institution.

‘ To the Committee of the Scottish Unitarian Association.

‘ Gentlemen,

‘ As I have spent but little more than *four months* in the office of Missionary of the Scottish Unitarian Association, the report of my proceedings during that period, will not, of course, occupy much space, nor embrace many important particulars. The places to which my attention has hitherto been chiefly directed, are Carlisle, Paisley, Kilmarnock, and Tillycoultry. My plan of visiting these places, has been, to go to

Carlisle on the first and third Sabbaths in the month; to Paisley on the last Sabbath in the month; and then, as there remained four Sabbaths in a quarter, to devote two of these to Kilmarnock, and the other two to Tillicoultry.

‘Conformably with this plan, I have visited Carlisle seven times, Paisley four, Kilmarnock three, and Tillicoultry two. I have also preached at Lanark, on the evening of the first Sabbath in each month; and at Johnstone, near Paisley, I have preached once. The attendance on preaching, the acceptableness of my services, and the prospects of the effects likely to be produced by my labours, at the four places in which I have preached most frequently, will be best made known to you, by the statements which the Societies at those places will themselves give. But to those statements, I can with propriety and truth add, that I have been highly pleased and greatly encouraged by the attendance given, and the prospects of doing good, which have been presented. If all my wishes have not been gratified, at least the expectations I had entertained, have been fully realised.

‘What I have seen of the Societies at Carlisle, Paisley, and Tillicoultry, has fixed in my mind an undoubting belief, that, in addition to the long, consistent, and fearless avowal of their sentiments on the great saving doctrines of Christianity, they will continue to uphold, amidst all opposition, and to disseminate, regardless of difficulties and reproaches, what they deem to be the truth, respecting man and his duties, Christ and his teachings, God and futurity.

‘Of Kilmarnock, which is an entirely new station, little more can at present be said, than that the favourable way in which Christian Unitarianism has been received in that town, and the handsome manner in which several persons there have come forward and tendered their support, of the endeavour to form a Unitarian Society in that place, furnish clear ground on which to build the expectation, that in due time, a congregation not small, will regularly assemble, to pay their worship to the *One God* and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

‘At Lanark, the services have been well attended, and every encouragement has been given for the repetition of those services.

‘Johnstone having been visited but once, no opinion can at present be formed, as to the future attendance on Unitarian worship in that village, although the number of persons who sanctioned by their presence that first visit, was considerable.

‘Having visited some places in Ayrshire, with the expectation of preaching, and having been disappointed in that expectation chiefly by the state of political excitement, it occurred to me, that another mode might be advantageously adopted, to diffuse the great practical principles of Christianity. Impressed with this idea, I caused notice to be given in the village of Wishawtown, that I would deliver, in the open air, a lecture, in which I would show, that ‘Christianity is a complete Reform Bill.’ My auditors amounted to, at least, five hundred, and the greatest possible satisfaction with the lecture was manifested. Thus encour-

aged by the success of my plan, I, the next week, announced the same lecture for delivery, in the open air, at Bannockburn; and was listened to, with the deepest attention, by at least eight hundred persons. In both instances, I was requested to resume and carry forward the subject at my earliest opportunity, and pledged myself to do so.

‘The very favourable reception of this lecture, warrants the belief, that the simple truths of the Gospel may be made to bear upon, and beneficially direct political discussions and popular excitements. The reason for this belief, will perhaps appear more clearly, when it is stated, that in showing Christianity to be a complete Reform Bill, I excluded entirely from consideration, all human articles of faith, and creeds, and catechisms; and dwelt wholly upon the four great practical principles of Christianity:

‘1st, The Fatherly character of the One God—2d, The brotherhood of men—3d, The perfect example of Christ—and 4th, The accountability of human beings for their actions, at the judgment day. The success of this experiment would have convinced me, had I not been previously satisfied, that a belief in these plain and rational doctrines of Jesus is gaining ground, even amongst those who seem scarcely aware of the tendency of their own minds towards such doctrines.

‘And to spread in every way I can the Gospel truths, that God is One, and God is Love; that men are brethren; that Jesus is a perfect example; and that men will be judged by their actions, will, I trust, continue to be the first desire of my heart, and the constant aim of my Missionary exertions.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

HENRY CLARKE.’

[The Correspondents at the various towns and villages express acknowledgments for the books forwarded to them, and concur in opinion as to the good they are likely to effect. In many places they are read with eagerness. In the stations at which Mr. Clarke labours, warm approbation is expressed of his services, and earnest wishes that they may be continued. In all, he is listened to both by friends and strangers with satisfaction. At Edinburgh, the attendance at public worship, notwithstanding the removal of several friends, has increased one-third; and the number of new applications for seats has been greater than in any former year. Since the publication of the last Report, besides an increase in the number of non-subscribers, twenty regular seat-holders have been added to this congregation. At Greenock, the debt of £100 incurred in fitting up the Chapel is nearly liquidated. An additional debt has been contracted, by fitting up as houses the building under the Chapel; but by which the congregation

will ultimately have their place of worship rent-free. Could this also be defrayed, the cause there would be permanently established. At Glasgow, the congregation has lost, by death and removal, twenty-three subscribers; but there have joined, since the last Anniversary, fifty-five new subscribers, some of whom have families. At Tillicoultry, the Society has been reduced one-half by removals and deaths; but though small in number, are still persevering and firm, well convinced of the future prosperity and success of the sacred cause.]

“ The Committee would particularly notice, in reference to Tillicoultry, that on the Sunday previous to your Missionary’s last visit to that place, the Rev. Mr. Pollock of the Secession Church, had preached in the Meeting-house belonging to the denomination in that village, and had, in the course of his sermon, indulged in the usual strain of denunciation of Christian Unitarianism. Had he stopped there, so common an occurrence would scarcely have been considered worthy of special remark. But this individual used language in reference not alone to the opinions, but the personal character of Unitarians, which self-respect could not suffer them to pass over silently. A letter of remonstrance was therefore addressed to Mr. Pollock, by the Unitarians of Tillicoultry, to which this ‘false accuser of the brethren’ deigned no reply. The friends there deemed it right that an Address to the Inhabitants should be drawn up and left at every house, embodying their views and feelings; and your Missionary did so at their request. It was printed and circulated through the village and its neighbourhood. The Committee are confident that the Association will be gratified at the rebuke uncharitableness has thereby received, and will thank them for having introduced so admirable an Address into their Report:—

‘ To the Inhabitants of Tillicoultry and its Vicinity.

‘ Neighbours and Friends,

‘ A few persons who live amongst you, and who have been grossly insulted, abused, and maltreated, lay their case before you, beg you to consider that case, and ask from you that defence, which you have it within your power, and which we cannot doubt, you will see it to be your duty to give. Hear us; judge between us and our injurer; and do as you would be done unto.

‘ Our case is this. On Sabbath, July 1st, Mr. Pollock preached in the Secession Meeting-House, Tillicoultry, and in his Sermon used, as we were informed, the following expressions:—‘ There is a set of Socinians in this place, falsely calling themselves Unitarians, a name which does not belong to them, a set of unmanly

hypocritical, designing infidels.' We who, in this place, do call ourselves Unitarians, wrote a letter to Mr. Pollock, remonstrating against this false, abusive, and unchristian language, to which he deigned us no reply. As Mr. Pollock has thus tacitly acknowledged having used the language imputed to him, we appeal to you in proof of what we assert, when we say that it is utterly false. You know us, and can testify that we are neither unmanly, hypocritical, nor designing. And, if one who calls himself a Christian minister, dares to utter for truth, from the pulpit, that which he either knows to be false, or does not know to be true, we ask you, does not that man richly deserve the censure and execration of every Christian, and even of every one possessed of the common feelings of humanity?

'Mr. Pollock either told the truth respecting us, or sought to make dupes and tools of his hearers. You know he did not tell the truth respecting us; and will you permit a person to tell you barefaced falsehood about your neighbours, without refuting and resenting it? Will you suffer yourselves to be made the dupes and tools of men who have so little honesty and decency, as to come into a village, and denounce some of its peaceable inhabitants as unmanly, hypocritical, and designing—without even knowing the persons whom they thus abuse? Make the case your own, and then you will instantly perceive how you ought to act. You will then see, that you ought to let this Mr. Pollock, and every reckless false accuser of his brethren know, that you will not sanction false accusations; that you will not be made dupes and tools; and that you will not remain in a place of worship, while truth and justice, and all the feelings of humanity, are thus outraged. You have the power, if you possess the noble and Christian-like disposition, to put such vilifiers down. You have nothing to do, but just rise up and walk out of the place, when a preacher begins to tell you that about your neighbours, which you know to be untrue. You would thus teach such teachers a most important lesson, and do yourselves great credit and lasting honour.

'We say nothing to you about our religious opinions, except simply this: that if they are unscriptural, let them be proved to be so, by Scripture, and not by calumny—in the spirit of Christ, and not in the spirit of rancorous abuse. Show us that we are wrong, and put us right, and we will thankfully acknowledge the obligation under which we have been laid. But to attack our character, which we hold to be of the highest value to us, is surely not the way to convince us of error, even if our religious opinions were wrong. What we profess, we believe to be the truth as it is in Jesus. Is it unmanly, to state fearlessly what you believe? Is it hypocritical, to make an open profession of opinions which you think to be founded on truth? Is it designing, to tell your fellow-men what you deem to be the enlightening, purifying, saving doctrines of Christianity? Is it unmanly, hypocritical, and designing, to cherish good will and Christian charity towards all men? You reply, no. Then act according to your conviction. Denounce, cry shame upon, and scout that

man, who, under the guise of preaching the Gospel of Christ, attacks the characters of persons whom he does not even know, and attempts to sow anger, malice, and discord amongst neighbours.

‘Should it be thought that we complain too bitterly against this one traducer of our character, we are constrained, alas! to add, that we have been similarly abused again and again. Several, among whom truth compels us to mention Mr. Nicol and Mr. Anderson, have grossly misrepresented our opinions, and employed the most unfair insinuations respecting our motives. This may be zeal, but it is not religion. And if the zeal of ministers outstrip their knowledge—if their speculative theology banish their honesty and good feeling—if their notions termed religious, destroy their charity; then it is high time that the people teach their teachers how they ought to teach, in the same way as the people have lately taught their rulers how to rule. Yes, the times of reformation are come, and governments must be reformed, and churches must be reformed, and angry, vilifying, character-traducing pulpit declaimers must be reformed; and the people must act as real Christian reformers, and demand and secure this reformation.

‘It is said, that ‘for a nation to be free, it is sufficient that she will it.’ And for a city, town, or village to be free from that ill-will and discord, which preachers attempt to scatter amongst the inhabitants, when they misrepresent the opinions and motives of all who differ from them, it is sufficient that the people will this freedom. To his own Master every man must stand or fall. In matters of religion, Christ is the only Master. This Master preclaims peace on earth, good will to men, and universal love, as the themes for Christian preaching. The office of a Christian minister is disgraced, when abuse, calumny, and falsehood flow from the preacher’s tongue. Such preachers do more injury to the cause of Christianity than its open enemies. Violated reason and outraged humanity revolt at the conduct of these preachers; and right feelings, and real Christian principles, rise up and exclaim, this man cannot be a disciple of the lowly blessed Jesus, for he has not the mind of Christ, and the spirit of love.

‘In conclusion: we would be distinctly understood, to call upon you to resist, cry shame upon, and frown out of fashion, this pulpit misrepresentation and abuse, much more for your own sakes than for ours. We have learned from the New Testament, to treat fair opponents with kindness, calumniators with reproof, and false accusers with mingled pity and contempt. But you owe it to your relation as neighbours, your character as honest men, and your profession as Christians, to defend the injured, to insist on fair play, and to demand Christian language and behaviour from every Christian minister, under whose preaching you consent to sit.

‘Neighbours and Friends—the desire of our heart is, that you may enjoy the liberty, peace, and love of the freed men of Christ. Then will you be free from prejudice, free from bigotry, free to oppose antichristian conduct, free to seek the truth, and free indeed.

THE UNITARIANS OF TILlicOUNTRY.’

[The Treasurer's Report was then read. It showed that the income of the Association was *doubled* since last year; but that there was a balance against the Society of £1 : 10 : 5.]

"In concluding this account of their stewardship, the Committee trust their efforts during the past year, will prove satisfactory to the Association. Cheerfully would they have accomplished more, had the means at their disposal been more ample. With the limited resources which were available, they trust something—and, speaking comparatively, in considering this their day of small things—much has been accomplished. Foundation has at least been laid for future usefulness. A valuable accession has been made to the public labourers in the demolition of error and the building up of truth. The various individuals and societies are knit together in closer bonds of union; and union is strength, and knowledge is power, and perseverance in well-doing is eventual victory; and the blessing of that Eternal Father, the glory of whose character they would magnify, whose unrivalled unity and essential unbounded mercy they would induce their fellow-creatures to believe and trust in, they humbly hope will sanctify the labour; for it is devoted to human liberty, it vindicates the purity and benevolence of the Saviour's mission, and it manifests that the increased and increasing intelligence and happiness of man was the great purpose of his advent; its pilgrimages are those of Christian mercy, not of sectarian rancour: it would bind in fraternal affection those of every station, for all are brethren—it would present them with minds improved, and hearts enlarged, and duties faithfully performed, in the name of their Elder Brother, Jesus Christ the Righteous, a living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice, the purified children of a benignant Father, before the throne of ETERNAL LOVE."

The following Resolutions were unanimously adopted:

"That the Report of the Committee be received and adopted."

"That the members of this Association, fully sensible of the obstacles which impede the reception and open profession of their principles, arising from ignorance, prejudice, misrepresentation, and worldly fashion, gladly offer up their thanksgivings to the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the progress which those principles have made during the past year; and reverencing humanity as the image of God, and God as the Parent of creation, and the

Source of every blessing, they will devote their earnest efforts to the dissemination and practical illustration of a faith which honours the Deity, in making his offspring enlightened, virtuous, and happy."

"That this Meeting rejoices in the accomplishment of that most important object of the Association, the engagement of a Missionary for Scotland; their cordial thanks are given to Rev. H. Clarke for his devoted labours, their earnest wishes are expressed for his continued usefulness, and their heart's desire and prayer is, that God may speed his progress through the land."

"That the hearts of the members of this Association, have been cheered by learning the progress of what they deem Christian truth and righteousness, in other parts of these islands, and in various nations of the world; though mountains and oceans may separate, they feel themselves one with the enlightened and virtuous of every clime, and believing that God has formed of one blood all people, they rejoice in the triumphs of a religion, which, binding in fraternal affection the whole human family, will ensure the improvement, freedom, and happiness of all the inhabitants of earth."

"That regarding knowledge as the herald of every blessing, this Association welcomes every attempt to advance its prevalence; that believing education to be its chief means of promotion, they would give every aid to its diffusion; they, therefore, witnessed with approbation the plan of Government, in relation to the education of the people of Ireland, hoping that that plan would be productive of extensive benefit to that shamefully neglected and misgoverned nation, blending together the various classes of the population, carrying forward the friendship of boyish years, into the good neighbourhood of maturer life, quelling national feuds, and converting party spirit into actions of benevolence; objects which can only be opposed by the advocates of religious or political ignorance, misrule, and superstition."

"That the members of this Association, have taken a deep interest in the proceedings of their brethren in Ireland—they have sympathised in their struggles for Christian liberty—they have honoured them for their integrity, in preferring Christian purity to creed corruption—they have rejoiced in their perseverance in the beneficent labour of diffusing the peaceful spirit of Christ amidst sectarian rancour and established intolerance—their cor-

dial greetings are respectfully given to the Rev. Henry Montgomery, the eloquent champion of emancipation, both to Protestant and Catholic—their warmest thanks are tendered for his attendance and labours at this Association, and earnestly is the hope expressed, that his efforts may long be blessed in the advocacy of truth, the defence of the oppressed, the moral education and improvement of the people, the establishment of their liberties, and the diffusion of those principles of righteousness and benevolence, on which the happiness of individuals and of nations is dependant.”

“That Christianity having called its disciples to liberty, and the Saviour being the only Head of the Christian Church, this Meeting considers all interference with the sacred rights of conscience, to be destructive of that liberty and a usurpation of the authority of Christ; they conceive, that that interference is equally antichristian, whether exercised by a Parliament, in excluding from civil employment, those who entertain sentiments at variance with Established Churches, or by an Assembly deposing its members for what they choose to stigmatise as heresy; and that they cannot believe, that the descendants of those who broke the Papal yoke, can long submit to be entangled in a similar bondage; but that, with the spirit of their forefathers, they will demand the recognition of their rights as men, and the enjoyment of their privileges as Christians.”

“That Christianity declares, that where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty; and therefore, this Meeting cannot separate, without congratulating each other on that bloodless victory of liberality over antiquated prejudice, which has distinguished their common country since their last Anniversary—they rejoice in the disenfranchisement of the public mind, from the bondage of state-corruption, the infusion of juster principles into public institutions—they regard these events as additional testimonies to the truth and practical value of the religious principles they profess—and they trust, that all will use their privileges to the promotion and establishment of the improvement, liberty, virtue, and happiness of the whole people—the whole world.”

“That the cordial thanks of the Association, are given to the Rev. B. T. Stannus, for his eloquent and impressive illustration of Christian benevolence and truth, in his Sermon of yesterday.”

"That this Meeting would not do justice to their feelings, were they not to record their warm approbation of the manner in which the Rev. William Smith of Dundee has advocated the holy and benevolent principles they are associated to promote—their deep regret at the loss which their common cause will sustain in his removal from Scotland—their sincere and fervent prayers for his success and happiness—and their earnest hope, that wherever the providence of God may appoint him, his labours will be devoted to all that is ennobling to man and honourable to the Almighty."

In moving and seconding these Resolutions, the Meeting was addressed by Mr. Gettmill of Greenock; Messrs. Manson, Galloway, Muir, Thomson, Davidson, Blyth, Rae, R. Hedderwick, and Johnston, of Glasgow; Messrs. Findlay, C. Dunlop, and Wilson, of Paisley; and by Revs. W. Smith, A. Macdonald, B. T. Stannus, H. Clarke, and G. Harris. Mr. Montgomery delighted the Meeting by his remarks; a pleasure we should gladly have shared with the readers of this Magazine. But we were too much occupied in listening to his eloquent vindication of truth and liberty, to be able to take notes; and we fear to mar the effect of his observations by attempting an outline.

The Rev. William Smith of Dundee, moved the second Resolution, and spoke to the following effect:—

"That the cause of Unitarian Christianity has not declined during the past year, it requires but a very slight retrospection to feel gratefully and happily assured. Messengers of joyous tidings have visited our shores from distant and divided climes, bearing to us the pleasing intelligence, that in both the eastern and western world, the good tidings which have refreshed our souls, are gladdening the hearts of the sad, and emancipating the minds of the enthralled. The chains of prejudice and error, the darkness of ignorance and superstition are bursting from around our fellow-men; the sun of truth has dispelled the accumulated mists of ages, and awakened to the smile of their Creator, and to the love of a Father, of whose soul-winning perfections they had before been ignorant, numbers who had hitherto walked in the gloomy valley and dark shadow of a false and heart-chilling theology.

"Nearer home the prospect is not less cheering, the salutations of our friends not less pleasingly indicative of the onward cause of our holy principles. France, where but lately a kingly despot was dragged by the mighty arm of an insulted and injured people, from a throne which he had desecrated by crime, and forfeited by tyranny—France, whose sons have ennobled themselves by struggles the most glorious for a liberty still unenjoyed, but not ever to be withheld, has commenced within herself a reformation more purifying, a contest more holy than any which has yet consecrated her soil as the land of freedom and birth-place of independence.

"She has begun the noble work of detecting error, subduing prejudice, unmasking superstition, and repressing intolerance in the province of religion. Minds mighty in intellectual power have turned their energies in that direction, in which they may be profitably employed for the improvement and enlightenment of mankind. Too long disgusted with the revolting doctrines and child-like mummeries which had been associated with the religion of Jesus, they had despised Christianity as alone calculated to affright

the timid fanatic, and regarded religious ceremonies as gaudy shows, amusive to the ignorant and the weak; but they have now discovered the error of such hasty conclusions, they perceive that they had mistaken the inventions of ambitious or weak-minded men, and the tricks of self-interested and artful priests, for the teachings of the gospel and the requirements of Christ's unostentatious religion. Perusing that gospel for themselves, they have felt and acknowledged its beauty and its worth; they have found therein treasures of wisdom, and they have rejoiced in the discovery; they have recognized the simple majesty of truth in a book which they formerly deemed unworthy of perusal, judging (as too many unhappily do, and have done) from the conduct and instructions of men, who, while they profess to admire and obey the Scriptures, corrupt their contents and disregard their precepts. Many are there in that nation who have escaped the rocks of religious bigotry, and the not less fatal vortex of a chilling scepticism, who have passed the dangerous strait, and are now in the safe and open sea, and require but a correct chart to guide them to the happy land of religious peace. Who shall furnish them with the required knowledge? who shall pilot them to the wished-for haven? The Unitarian preacher. And he has appeared and proffered his aid and guidance—has been welcomed with cordiality and heard with attention. May he be the herald of a great and mighty revolution in the sentiments and moral feelings of a people who have been too long 'seeking rest and finding none.' May the hymn of thanksgiving for religious emancipation, ere long mingle with the anthem of a free and happy nation.

"I need not advert in detail to the advancement of our principles in our own country during the past year; the progress they have made must be known to all. In estimating the prevalence of our principles, we should remember, that it is not from the number of persons who have professed Unitarianism and connected themselves with our churches, that we are to judge of the real progression of our faith in the good opinion of the public, nor conclude respecting the prosperous or adverse condition of our cause.

"Unitarianism is not exclusive nor sectarian in her principles; she insists not upon loud professions, public demonstrations of attachment to certain forms and rites, and ostentatious displays of adherence to parties and places, as indispensable characteristics of her friends, and essential to the safety of the soul. She indeed calls upon all who value the truth, who are interested in the happiness and improvement of mankind, who reverence the authority of Jesus and bow to his law, to witness a good confession in the presence of their brethren, and by example and influence to advance a faith which is calculated to honour God by improving man; but she ventures not to usurp the prerogative of Deity. She dares not consign to eternal perdition, nor even to exclude from the pale of Christianity, all who worship by another creed, or who, with the faith of a Unitarian, make not a public profession of principles whose maintenance should be esteemed an honourable and sacred duty. Deprived, by her reverence for the meek character of Jesus and respect to his charitable and tolerant laws, of the

popular weapon of anathema and denunciation, Unitarianism is unable to compel her timid friends to unite with a church which they admire, or to awaken, by the horrors of future pains and penalties, the thoughtless and indifferent from their unbecoming apathy. And thus, to a casual observer, is our number thinned by hundreds and by thousands.

“ And are there not many other causes which operate to deprive Unitarianism of the countenance and support of those who, while they admire her loveliness, withhold their open and unabashed advocacy of her cause? Are there not the secret slanders and public calumnies of her enemies, to affright all who but imperfectly acquainted with our principles and our persons, are unable to detect the well-disguised misrepresentations, and hardly refutable, because untangible, insinuations of our foes? Is there not the applause of the many? Is there not prosperity in trade, and custom in commerce? are there not desirable employments and lucrative situations associated with an adherence to popular creeds, to bribe the avaricious and purchase the seeming acquiescence of all with whom pride of place and abundance of riches are more estimable than peace of conscience and the testimony of an approving heart? And when all these are inoperative, is there not worldly fashion, the veriest tyrant that ever ruled the opinions and dictated the actions of men, to cast her silken though powerful cords around all who worship at her fane, and by shouts of ridicule and reproach, and promises of favour and regard, to draw away the hearts of all who have the misfortune or the folly to be caught by her?

“ Are not all these things exerting their baleful influence to restrain the open profession of our faith? We all know many, how great must be the aggregate! who, with feelings friendly to our cause, from the circumstances I have mentioned, refuse or neglect to come forward in the spirit of honesty and candour, and uphold and extend, by their influence, example, and persuasion, the sacred principles of Unitarian Christianity.

“ While we greatly blame, we cannot but compassionate the victims of the carelessness, timidity, and selfishness which thus thin our ranks; but we anticipate a period when these various obstacles shall be removed, and when multitudes who now bow the neck to a yoke which they despise, shall cast from them fetters which bind only because they are unresistingly worn. When this time shall arrive, our true strength will be seen and acknowledged. Coeval with the downfall of religious establishments, with the abolition of all bribes which purchase conscience, and the silence of that spiritual artillery which now so widely and so loudly fulminates its terrors against the unfortunate heretic, will be the universal prevalence of our catholic principles. They are making certain, though it may be stealthy progress, among the members of every Christian church. We could wish, indeed, that their path was more distinctly traceable in the external profession of their friends; but we have perfect confidence in the mightiness of truth: for a time she may be concealed by the immense mass of prejudice, perversion, and selfishness, which false education, human

passion, and worldly interest may have heaped around; but, like the hidden spring which collects its waters in the recesses of the mountain, and at length breaks forth to sparkle in the sunbeam, and refresh and fertilize the earth, will truth vindicate her power, and, escaping from unholy thralldom, more mighty from her forced confinement, go forth among the children of men, the lovely messenger of peace, the welcome minister of human improvement, virtue, and happiness.

“ Did we require any other evidence than our own personal knowledge, to convince us that our principles are holding on their onward course of sure and steady advancement, I might refer you to the admissions of those who view that advancement with feelings far otherwise than friendly. These admissions meet us in every quarter; I refer you but to one. It may be found in ‘The Record’ newspaper, the organ of the Trinitarian Evangelicals in England. The number of that Journal for the 6th February, 1832, contains the following unwilling, though to us gratifying confession:—

“ ‘ It is said that Socinianism is on the decline; of this, alas, we see no sufficient indication; on the contrary, we perceive the greatest activity, although in a very secret and unostentatious manner, displayed by the body. So far from their principles declining, we fear that, in an altered form, they are eating like a canker into the church.’

“ The nickname of Socinianism employed by this writer, and his dolorous lament over the evident advance of our principles, we can pardon, because we are thus assured that this is the honest acknowledgment of an adversary endeavouring to vilify a faith whose triumphant entrance even into the very strongholds of its foes, he cannot conceal and dares not deny.

“ I might dwell at much length upon this gratifying topic, but I have perhaps said enough to satisfy all who hear me, that we have abundant cause for thankfulness to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we contemplate the steady progress of our principles during the past year. Permit me, in the terms of the Resolution I am about to move, to advert to the obligation under which we lie, of aiding, by every means in our power, the dissemination of principles which we believe to be greatly honourable to God, and infinitely profitable to man.

“ Our opponents taunt us with having no creed, or revile it as too scanty to awaken our interest or claim our devotion. Let us not countenance the calumny by verifying the reproach. Are we accused of being without a creed? Let us point to the beautiful and simple formulary of our faith, whose every sentence is expressed in the language of Scripture, and whose every proposition is consistent with the dictates of right reason.

“ ‘ There is but one God, the Father, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, delighting in mercy, abundant in goodness and in truth, the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, whom no man hath seen, or can see.’

“ ‘ There is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, the sent of God, the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person and perfections, who told to the world all things that he had heard from the Father, whose words were full of grace and truth, who has left us an example that we should follow in his steps, who died that we might live, who rose from the dead to bring life and immortality to light, and who ever liveth and maketh intercession for us.’ ”

“ ‘ There is appointed of God a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, when he shall render unto every man according to his works; to those who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, shall be awarded eternal life; but to them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be allotted tribulation and wrath, indignation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil.’ ”

“ ‘ Finally shall come the end, when God shall gather to himself in ONE, all things that are in heaven and that are in the earth; when the Son, having fulfilled the work given him to do, and having subdued ALL things unto his Father, shall himself become subject to Him that did put all things under him, that God may be ALL and in ALL.’ ”

“ Such is the faith of the Unitarian. Let him not be taunted with having no creed, when he has one written in the language of inspiration, and confirmed by the authority of Heaven. Let his revilers produce theirs, let them be impartially and truthfully compared, and let the slave of prejudice, the lover of mystery, and the admirer of creed-books, written in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, be humbled and subdued by the simple majesty of gospel truth, which flashes conviction upon the mind, while it moves the affections of the heart. To the promotion of these principles may we devote our zealous exertions—of them, may our lives ever be a practical illustration. When difficulty and trial cast a temporary shade around, may the eye of faith and hope rest upon the cheering and admonitory words, ‘ Be ye steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.’ ”

In moving the Resolution on Education, the Rev. A. Macdonald remarked,—“ Knowledge is indeed the herald of every blessing, and education is a word which expresses the imparting of useful knowledge in a regular and effectual manner. Without education, the human soul is a very imperfect thing. Born ignorant, man has every thing to acquire, and labour of head or hand is the purchase-money he must pay for all his enjoyments. The glory of his nature is not that he comes into life matured in vice or virtue, but that he comes into life with the capacity of being good or evil—the grand distinction of his nature is its power of indefinite improvement—the wonder of the being called man, is that, originally so feeble, he is capable of rising by the cultivation of his faculties to such excellence and power, for knowledge is power; and the right cultivation of the human faculties is what we mean by education.

"We rejoice in the Government plan of education for Ireland. It will be some atonement for the sufferings and wrongs endured by Ireland, at the hands of the British Government. I say emphatically, the Government of England and Scotland have misgoverned Ireland; for I trust the people of England and Scotland feel that Irishmen are brethren. Yes, the progress of education has now spread through the community the conviction, that no class or section of our countrymen ought to be depressed, because the tyranny may extend itself—the injustice committed in Ireland to-day, may be extended to Scotland to-morrow. Equal laws and privileges, therefore, offer the best security for the happiness of all.

"The schoolmaster has perhaps a greater influence over the human mind—the schoolmaster perhaps contributes more to form the future man than the preacher, because he has access to the youthful mind in the period of its greatest susceptibility, before the contagion of society has yet stained the robe of infant purity. It is, therefore, among the excellences of this plan of education, that it is designed usefully to train the minds of children. And what better legacy can a poor man leave his children, than a good education? To teach us in early life, habits of industry, regularity, perseverance, benevolence, and fortitude, is a much better legacy than to bequeath us houses and lands, because these qualities are most likely to ensure competence; but especially such education gives a man the possession of *himself*, without which, riches will afford only a splendid misery. With what gratitude and veneration do we recal the image of such a parent, who, though he has left us not much of this world's substance, gave us his blessing, and taught us to be good. Such a parent, 'being dead yet speaketh,' and when he is laid in his narrow house, his children, as they tread over his grave, 'will call him blessed.'

"The cause of education, my Christian friends, is the cause of man; and this Association, whose object is, the promotion of Christian truth and righteousness, must look with approbation on every good plan of promoting the holy cause of human improvement. We acknowledge, that schools of learning and halls of science, are co-operating with us, in the great work of 'enlightening every man that cometh into the world.' In every school, as well as in every church, are deposited the pledges of present and future happiness. As education means the acquiring of useful knowledge, it is really nothing more than the art of teaching us to consult our well-being, with all that certainty of success which knowledge can give. Education, in this sense, is the culture of the heart and the understanding; it includes the formation of virtuous habits, as well as the acquirement of sound knowledge. Education, in this sense, is nothing else than the apprenticeship which moral beings must serve, in order to learn the art of rational happiness. We therefore rejoice in the spread of education; because we know when she is present, every Christian grace and every manly virtue will wait upon her.

"We rejoice in the diffusion of education, because education promotes union and brotherhood among mankind. Like truth, education is the friend of man. She is the partisan of no country,

but the beneficent patroness of all. Her temple is ready to admit all nations, and she is good to all. She never inquires about the country or sect of those who desire to be learners. It is enough that you are a man; 'enter and know thyself.' Education throws down the middle wall of partition which separates nations, crucifies their prejudices, and by offering pursuits in which all may engage without strife, it goes to destroy wars and hatreds, by 'showing a more excellent way.' Through education, distant peoples learn to converse, and losing the awkwardness of strangers and the moroseness of suspicion, they learn to know and understand one another. Engaged in the pursuit of useful knowledge, which exercises no unsocial feeling, which leaves no sting behind, the chain of universal friendship is extended, till it embrace all mankind.

"Education enables us to converse with our own minds. It gives a man 'rejoicing in himself.' He who has treasured up a store of useful ideas, is not miserable when he wants company. He is never less alone, than when he is alone. To read an entertaining volume, has often subdued pain by diverting the attention, and soothed anxiety and grief, till 'sleep, tired nature's sweet restorer,' has steeped both pain and sorrow in forgetfulness.

"He who understands and relishes music, it has been said, possesses an additional sense beyond the man who is insensible to the charms of that fascinating art. But the man of education has not only a new faculty, but a new world opened to him—the world of mind. The uneducated savage looks upon the same face of nature as the philosopher, but his eye sees only 'a mighty maze, perhaps without a plan.' Education has not opened to him the world of mind—

Knowledge to his eyes, her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unfold;

and therefore, to him creation's glories are eclipsed.

"But what shall I say more? the time would fail me; yet I cannot say too much of the advantages of a moral and intellectual education to the human race. But I will affirm it, that the idea of all mankind educated—all mankind receiving a moral and intellectual education, is one of the grandest conceptions that ever opened to the mind of man. Next to the idea of a Universe, pure and happy under the eye of its Creator, is that of an educated mankind. Indeed, final purity and happiness is the consummation of universal knowledge. Here is a field in which philanthropy may exert itself, without fear of exhausting its objects. Ye who wish to do the most lasting good to your race, carry forward the education of mankind. If ambition fires you, behold here is a field in which you may reap laurels that never fade. 'Cast thy bread upon the waters, and after many days thou shalt find it,' is eminently true of education. Kings! there is an honour better than that of wearing a crown of gold—to rule over an enlightened or educated people, whose loyalty is a rational attachment to the guardian of the laws, a principle totally different from the blind-fighting propensity which braves the cannon's mouth, for the aggrandisement of a particular family, but contributes not to the cause of universal human liberty. Kings! educate the nations, and become the fathers of mankind!

"I will go one step higher in praise of education. What is Christianity, but a system for the moral education of man, to train human nature to glory, honour, and immortality?

"And 'blessed be God,' there is no monopoly of mind. There are monopolies in trade, monopolies in power, and even monopolies of heaven; but of mind or mental faculties, there is no monopoly. The rich and poor have received equal capacities from the Dispenser of good. Under a plebeian dress, are hid the poet, the statesman, the philosopher; and only the hand of education is wanted to call forth the slumbering powers. And it is one special advantage of the riches of mind, imparted by education, that those riches are not lessened by diffusion. If one is rich in this world's substance, another must be poor; but knowledge is increased as it is diffused by education.

"Education has certainly progressed among all classes, but we have not yet much reason to boast of its wide diffusion. Every country, and our own among them, contains learned men; but only the *few* are learned. Education, like the sun rising, has only fallen on the summits of society; it has not yet penetrated the thick darkness of the tangled wilderness of the world's population. Still we have reason to rejoice that so much has been done, and so much more is in prospect. The time was, when bishops were *marksmen* (because unable to write their names)! That time is gone; and the wish, worthy of a king of England will soon be realised over the British empire, 'when every little boy and girl will be able to read the Bible.'

"Perhaps not more than one in every ten has a competent education. I speak from information laid before Parliament. Can we then wonder at the increase of crime, with a growing population? Among a hundred malefactors, three-fourths of this number can neither read nor write; seventy-five have broken laws which they had no means of knowing, and which, therefore, to them were not laws, because education was not afforded.

"Still, the present time is auspicious to the cause of education. Mechanics' institutions, schools, reading-rooms, popular lectures on science, libraries, are extending over the land of Newton and the land of Channing. A society of useful knowledge has been formed at Paris. The patriots of France have 'read the signs of the times,' and they perceive that revolutions fall dead-born without an educated people. We may venture to predict, when the *third* French revolution happens, the benefits will not evaporate into air and die away in unavailing promises; for communal schools are being extended over the country, and the people of France are being educated.

"The time is auspicious to education in Britain, for there is a rich overgrown Establishment to be reformed; and now that the People's House of Representation is purified, we may expect that the money which the people contribute, will be made available to the people's education.

"We accept in good part, the plan of education for Ireland. So far as it goes, it is good; but we trust it is only the prelude and harbinger of universal education to England, Scotland, and Ireland. The Irish education is not a final measure. Governments owe to the governed, to afford to *all* the means of instruction. Rulers of the people! forbear to choose our creeds in science or religion, by making those traps for conscience called Church establishments, but by education, enable us and leave us to choose for

ourselves. No longer attempt to bind about our necks, musty creeds which we have outgrown, as we have outgrown our baby-clothes; and if you must, in the benevolence of your wisdom, have something established, keep pace with the age, and exchange, in the name of Heaven, a national church for national education.

"Liberal religion must gain by the spread of education. The angel of knowledge is about to draw the veil from the haggard features of Calvinism; and I cannot persuade myself, when education has taught the people to think, that they will continue to call that Christianity, which leaves God without mercy and man without hope—which demands the prostration of the mind, and says 'let me blindfold your eyes and you will see clearly.' I cannot believe that an educated people will agree to unlearn at church what they learned at school—3 are not 1, and 1 is not 3—unless, by a despicable quibble or play upon words, which needs only to be mentioned that it may be despised. No, no, wherever education is, there rational religion will follow. But while many are afraid of the nod of the plain presbyter as if he were the Pope—while Protestants borrow from Popery its worst feature, that of making creeds to bind the human mind—while many sacrifice to fashion in opposition to principle—and while the public mind is stultified by tremendous and absurd dogmas, till it is driven for refuge from the horrors of a cruel faith into infidelity, *then* is it wonderful that Unitarianism advances slowly? But as an injured subject once said to a king, 'I appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober,' so Unitarianism appeals from an uneducated to an educated people.

"While advocating universal education, something would require to be said on female education. On this engaging field, I must not allow myself to expatiate, nor is it needed. Those who consider how powerfully women contribute to give a tone to society, to form the taste and manners of mankind, but especially, that to them chiefly is committed the task of forming the infant mind will need no other arguments.

"Finally, my Christian friends, our rulers are entitled to our gratitude and confidence in this and other matters. Who could have predicted, three years ago, all we have witnessed, when tyranny slumbered on his couch, unthinking of *what was to be?* 'Blessed are our eyes!' I hope we have seen the dawn of universal freedom, the second reformation, the beginning triumph of knowledge over ignorance, and the rights of man over the claims of legitimacy. Yea, the sound has gone forth throughout all the earth, that the government of the sword is to give place to that of knowledge. Force, standing armies, hangings, and eternal punishments, are the resources of cruelty or ignorance. The great political changes we have lately witnessed, must be accompanied with an inward moral change. Education produces this moral change of character through knowledge. Bad government may exist with ignorance, but not with education. 'Tis wise then in Ministers to make both walk hand in hand. We want free trade in mind as well as in commerce; we require the destruction of the monopoly of knowledge, as well as of all other monopolies.

'Educate the people,' said Ewart in his place in Parliament; 'penal laws may inspire a fear of the punishment, but schools of knowledge will give a horror of the crime.' This Association therefore, rejoices in the education of fellow-men, whether across the Irish sea, the English channel, or the Atlantic ocean. The cause of education is the cause of man. May it spread till it be co-extensive with human nature. Then shall 'God's kingdom come, and his will be done on earth.'"

The Rev. B. T. Stannus of Edinburgh, seconded the Resolution. After a few general observations, which our limited space obliges us to omit, the speaker proceeded:—"Ireland wants education—Ireland wants repose. Ireland's repose will follow from Ireland's education; but the systems of education which have hitherto obtained in that unhappy land, were the mere machines of exclusiveness, invented by the wisdom and applied by the power of that segregated few who have clutched within their grasp the privileges and comforts of the Irish peasantry, and lived upon their heart-burning divisions. Such a system cannot produce repose—cannot pretend to be *national*—cannot, with propriety, be termed education. It is not a gospel education, although that hallowed name has been arrogantly assumed for it by the bigots of the Kildare-street body; and education consists not exclusively in running through the curriculum of certain book-tasks; on the contrary, some of its most valuable lessons are acquired in the social intercourse of man with his fellow-man. The friendly associations of youth cling to us in maturer years. But is it not obvious that this amicable intercourse can never prevail while a principle of exclusiveness is sanctioned—while a plan of covert proselytism is encouraged, and while Catholic children are compelled to read a Protestant Bible in part payment of education-fees, or submit to the alternative of leaving school—which the great majority of them have done? In adopting this procedure, they have acted right; and their spiritual guides have acted in strict conformity with justice in using their influence to withdraw them from seminaries nicknamed *national*, in which their consciences were thus disingenuously and unwarrantably interfered with. Could such a system of education ever become *national*? This cannot, with justice be pretended; and the system which interferes with the holy rights of conscience, and which comes short of general adoption, will never minister to Ireland's repose, and Ireland's intellectual and religious improvement.

"These are the great objects which our present Ministry have in view; and these are the results which would undoubtedly follow, if their healing measures were fairly and honourably dealt with. We indeed perceive the important consequences which have already resulted from the system, inasmuch as, while it has been in operation only for a very few months, it has effected more intrinsic good than the Kildare-street Society has done in 6 years.

"It is not surprising that, in Ireland, the Government system should be withstood by those religious and political Swiss, who live upon the opposition of party; it is not surprising that such individuals should clamour against the introduction of a measure

that will uproot their faction; it is not surprising that such men should, in the first instance, misrepresent the national plan, and afterwards attack the creation of their own malignity—thus likening themselves to the loathsome insect which first *creates* the putrescence and afterwards gorges itself upon it;—but, that it should be impugned in this country, where party rancour is comparatively subdued, is matter of amazement.

“It would be impossible, in the time to which each of the speakers at this meeting is necessarily limited, to combat the various puny objections which have been urged against the measure; but I apprehend that such as are of an *open* character are principally levelled against the mode of communicating religious instruction by means of **SCRIPTURAL EXTRACTS**. Now, in the name of wisdom, what is the substantial objection to their use? Is not the system every day acted upon in schools which make the whole Bible a daily class-book? We find the teacher selecting such portions of Scripture as he considers best calculated to promote the moral improvement of his pupils; and no rational man will venture to affirm that he acts injudiciously, or without a proper reverence for the Scriptures, who puts into the hands of his scholars the Ten Commandments, for example, in preference to the 109th Psalm; or our Lord’s sermon on the Mount, in preference to the Song of Solomon. And is it not a well-ascertained fact, that a system of scriptural extracts, prepared by Dr. Duncan of Ruthwell, is in daily use in that great metropolitan establishment, Heriot’s Hospital? yet, strange to say, some of the directors of that seminary are perfectly horror-struck at the idea of such a thing being introduced into unhappy, distracted Ireland! Why does their charity not begin at home? One of the most important of the opponents to the principle of selections is Dr. Chalmers; and yet that celebrated man compiled a book of Scriptural extracts for the instruction of the youth of Scotland. Where, then, is his consistency? Oh! but the Irish Education Board is composed of five Protestants and two Catholics, and the extracts must be ‘distilled through a human alembic.’ Most assuredly; but what argument can be deduced from this? that *every* book of extracts—*every* version of the Holy Scriptures is distilled through a human alembic, unless we are prepared to maintain the monstrous position that all *translators* are infallible, and act under the immediate inspiration of Heaven! If this position be *not* maintained, then the argument of ‘human alembics’ is immediately vacated.

“I cannot speak with certainty as to the prevailing custom here, but I speak upon authority when I affirm, that in Edinburgh there is scarcely an individual school that makes a daily class-book of the whole Bible. But even were it otherwise, it should be recollected that the circumstances of this country and of Ireland are very widely different. In Scotland, the population is almost wholly Protestant, whereas in Ireland, four-fifths, at least, of the people are Roman Catholics; and making allowance for the advantage of worldly wealth on the side of the Protestants, which enables them to educate their children at whatever seminaries they please, the proportion of Catholic to Protestant children attending a really

national establishment, would be at least ten to one. We know that in Scotland the numbers are in an inverse ratio; and truly this seems to be the foundation on which the Scottish opponents of the Ministerial plan found their arguments, which any one who thinks at all will immediately perceive to be a fallacy. Is it candid in gentlemen thus to draw inferences regarding Bible education, without minutely balancing the circumstances of the respective countries? It is not only unfair, it is irrational. As well might they attempt to estimate the resultant of two mechanical forces, whilst by many degrees the more powerful of the two was left out of the account. Again: if the *whole* Bible be good, will any of the ministers of Christ who oppose the healing measure of the Government, venture to affirm that it is not good in its several *parts*? Why else are these selected portions, on every succeeding Sabbath, chosen to be read to their flocks for their instruction in righteousness? Why have selections been made, from time to time, by individuals who now practically impugn their former acts? These extracts must have been good for something. But if they were compiled for a Scottish population, where there was no necessity for their introduction, the *whole* Bible being received, how much more beneficial must they be to a population who are not permitted to receive the *whole* Bible as a daily class-book? If this reasoning be correct, a compilation from the Scriptures is made for the youth of Scotland—why? because it is not necessary; but such a selection would be monstrous for the youth of Ireland—why? just because it is necessary. I tell the opponents of this plan of Scripture extracts, that it is the only way in which the people of that distracted land can *now* be induced, *as a nation*, to receive the word of God as a daily school-book; and I solemnly appeal to their consciences whether it be better to strive for the perpetuation of that which can never be productive of general good, which can never be a *national system*, which is at present rending asunder the ties which bind man to his fellow; or whether it be not more consonant with the Christian character, to endeavour to stay the angry passions of their fellow-subjects, in seeking to unite them by means of such an education as can alone be a healing measure? Whether, in fact, will they give them a part of the word of God, and thus foster a desire for the whole of that blessed book; or persevere in their unchristian course, and thus manifest a willingness to deprive them of the Bible altogether?"

Arguing upon the disparity in the numbers of Catholics and Protestants, Mr. Stennus familiarly illustrated the *impartiality* of the Government, by a comparison of its measures with the care of a parent for his family, which would prompt him to provide for them a species of food which, without detriment to any one, would give equal nourishment to all.

"The argument against the principle of extracts," continued Mr. S. "is turned into yet another form, though in reality differing little from its former shape, and then the whole vocabulary of *denunciation* is emptied on the philanthropic projectors of the plan. They are accused of taking away from the word of God, and they are favoured with the quotation of that text from the

book of 'the Revelation,' which says—'If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life.' Now, are they who impugn a system of extracts fully aware, that when they thus make quotations from the word of God, they are practically refuting themselves? They will not surely pretend to say that this, or any other detached passage, is the *whole* word of God; why, then, denounce the principle of extracts? But conceding to them the point, (which no impartial man will ever grant,) that the applying of this passage, by the traffickers in exclusive salvation, to the Education Board were correct, in what an awful condition does it place themselves, as, unfortunately for their cause, the passage refers also to such as *add* to the word of God! And will it be affirmed, that no *additions* have been made to the book of life—no forgeries committed on the spirit of God, and quoted in support of particular doctrines, as if the genuine language of inspiration? It is almost unnecessary to observe that those words which are printed in *italics* in our common version of the Bible, are the uninspired interpolations of translators. In the Acts of the Apostles, we read that 'they stoned Stephen calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;' and in 1 John iii. 16, the feelings of every truly Christian heart are wrung at the awful profanation of Jehovah's name, in the following words—'hereby perceive we the love of *God*, because he laid down his life for us.' God, the Great Spirit of the universe, lay down his life! These two texts are quoted in support of popular doctrines, whilst the word 'GOD,' on which their importance rests, is not found in the original of either. This is acknowledged in the common version of the New Testament, by the word being in *italics*; but both passages have been transferred into the pages of the 'BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER,' without the *italics* being noted, and thus are the *additions* of fallible men attempted to be foisted on the world as the language of genuine inspiration! If, then, 'fire is to be called down from heaven,' let those members of our national churches, who unscrupulously indulge in denunciation, beware lest it fall with awful vengeance on their own heads, for here is the remainder of the passage, the former part of which they quote:—'I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.'

"I now come to another part of this Resolution; and I fearlessly assert, that the hostility manifested against the Government education system—one of the *very few* healing measures which have been legislated for my unhappy country—proceeds from the bitterness of *political* rancour. It may indeed be said, that a minister of the Gospel should not interfere with politics; and this, to a certain extent, may be true. But on questions which involve the happiness and moral improvement of his fellow men, a minister has as just a right to give expression to his views as any other man, be his profession what it may. I do not wish it, however, to be understood, that I speak as a *representative* of any religious body, but merely as an individual. I have stated, that the most

determined opposition to the Irish education measure, is based upon a political ground. This has been denied; but with what show of truth can it be denied? It has been affirmed, that the hostility is unconnected with Toryism. What do gentlemen mean by such a gratuitous assertion? Is the plan opposed by any body of Whigs or Radicals? If it be, where are their names? Not connected with conservatives! Let us see: what says an advertisement which gives an account of a great and ostentatiously published meeting of the Kildare-street Society? It states, that the members assembled, deplored the removal of the grant from their own Society, and, at the same time, declared the plan of education suggested by the Government, as highly objectionable. And who are the individuals that thus gallantly form themselves among the ruins of the Kildare-street fortress, and feelingly deplore the introduction of the salutary measures of the Government? Listen to the names, and then judge for yourselves. A subscription is entered into, for supporting the *exclusive* establishment against the *national* one; and first in the list is His Highness of Cumberland—the man who disingenuously plotted for blighting the hopes of a nation! To him succeeds the Duke of Wellington, offering his pecuniary aid for annihilating the very plan of education which was introduced during his own premiership! In the catalogue are found the names of Kenyon, Bexley, Roden, Winchelsea, Abercorn, Dundas, Ingestrie, Shaw, &c. Another tribe succeeds—the impoverished Lawn-sleeves, the humble successors of the fishermen of Galilee, who doubtless contribute according to their very circumscribed means, poor men! But the mitred apostle of Exeter has, I would almost say wittingly, thrown ridicule on the whole affair. But probably he had exhausted his charity in laudably endeavouring to rend asunder the ties of affection between Earl Grey and his son-in-law. Be that as it may, he ‘writes down’ the munificent donation of *one guinea*, to prop the falling fortunes of the Kildare-street Society! ‘Call you that backing of your friends? A plague upon such backing!’ These, my Christian friends, are the names appended to the advertisement; and surely no one will venture to affirm, that they are not conservatives to a man.

“ But if the connection of the hostility to the Education Board with the spirit of Toryism, be still farther denied, I will not ask who are the Whigs that oppose the plan; but I will ask, why is it opposed by the conservatives at all? Was it not the very plan which was suggested by the Tories, and approved by the Bishops in 1812? Was it not recommended by the Commissioners of Education in 1825, while a Tory ministry was in office? Was there any opposition then? And so recently as 1830, was there not a Bill founded on principles similar to those of the new system, actually prepared? Where was the zeal of the present opponents then? Must they not now be accused of having slumbered on their posts? How absurd is the assertion, that the opposition is not connected with the enemies of Reform. The true secret of being so exceedingly docile in 1830, was, because the country had the honour of being then misgoverned by one of the weakest

ministries that ever held the reins of power—the Wellington administration. Oh, the kind, considerate souls did not wish to burden a Tory Government! And why, on the re-introduction of the measure under the Grey administration, was the clamour of objection made to echo from Caithness to the Thames? The reason is evident. It is almost childish to ask the question. It was designed to encumber the People's Ministry, to expel them from office, or to weaken their hands in reference to another great measure which has since been wrung from the grasp of corruption. Yes! thanks to the men of Birmingham—thanks to the descendants of the noble spirits who crushed the Invader on the plain of Bannockburn. The vultures who devoured their country's freedom, and who could not tolerate the idea that their nests of darkness and abomination should be disturbed, arose with a discordant scream at the ray of knowledge which exposed their accumulated impurities, whetted their beaks for vengeance, muffled their cadaverous aspects, wheeled around and around, and gradually narrowed the circles of their flight, until they pounced upon the food which was designed for the relief of Britons; but it has been torn from their beaks, and they have been despoiled of their talons, and plucked of their plumage, and the knell of their pristine glory has been rung in the swelling volume of a Nation's voice!

“From such men as the present Ministry, a system of impartial and effective education must emanate for the benefit of unhappy Ireland—a land which this resolution most truly characterises as a ‘shamefully neglected and misgoverned nation.’ Assailed by political enemies from without, consumed by the flames of internal discord, the fatness of her luxuriant hills exhausted to pamper the appetites of a few interested ecclesiastics, her resources drained by heartless absentees to squander in the voluptuous revellings of Italy and France, her cries for relief silenced by the omnipotent power of an overseer, or an array of bristling bayonets,—who should wonder that education has been neglected, that knowledge has not increased, and that contemplations upon her unhappiness, her misery, her wrongs, have been the only thoughts that preyed upon her broken spirit? But it is to be hoped, that Ireland will rise higher in the scale of nations, than she has ever yet done; and assuredly no means will be more effective in bringing about so glorious a result, than the diffusion of knowledge. This, we rejoice to see, will be furthered, not by an *exclusive*, but by means of the *first* NATIONAL plan of education that has been introduced into that divided land. The high and palmy days of Ireland are, we trust, now to be ushered in, and the influence of political and religious bigotry to be annihilated. I look upon this plan of education as the harbinger to a reign of peace in the land of my birth and my affection. And now, when the dove is winging its flight thither, with the olive branch of peace, and the bow of promise is beginning to form on the dark thunder-cloud, which may soon pass harmlessly away, let us hope that no discontented spirits will shoot the electric fire of party into the cloud, and rend the air with explosions, and deluge the land with the waters of discord, and darken the sunshine of hope, and destroy the bow of promise, and snatch the olive from the bird of peace, and condemn it to beat the air with weary wing, having no where to rest the

sole of its foot. Oh, had I those commanding powers of eloquence and of intellect which are possessed by my patron, the great and good man on whose accents we yesterday hung with rapture and delight, I would appeal to your understandings and your hearts, in behalf of my native land. I would picture to you the feuds and animosities, the spirit of deadly hate that stalks at noon-day over that unhappy country; I would describe to you the machinery of that exclusively proselytizing system which has arrayed Catholic against Protestant, and Protestant against Catholic, rent asunder the bonds of society, widened the gulf between the affections of the people, so that not a friendly thought can pass from one side to the other; I would show you Protestants understanding not one particle of genuine Protestant principle, haranguing the fiendish scum of the population under orange and purple banners; I would describe to you Protestant parents imitating the example of the old Carthaginian, dragging forward their children to the altars of intolerance, and compelling them to swear eternal hatred to the civil and religious freedom of their fellows; I would show you the tender minds of youth imbibing the deadly prejudices which brutalise mature humanity, yet willing to be at peace; I would place these children before you, and let them ask you for themselves, 'Can you, as Christians, behold the divisions which are degrading our fathers and ourselves—which spring from that jealousy and hatred and repulsive feeling, with which we have been taught to regard those who bear the common image of our Creator, and will you not seek to heal these heart-burning divisions by the influences of a kindlier education—will you not help us to live, if not in profession of the same creed, at least as children of the same Heavenly Parent?' And I do not think you could refuse them; and if you could not, I ask you to record the feeling by adopting this Resolution."

The Rev. A. Macdonald said "I obtrude myself on your notice, before the business of this meeting is concluded, to propose a vote of thanks to Mr. Harris. The Greeks fabled that Atlas bore the earth on his shoulders, but I rise to propose a vote of thanks to the man who, without any fable, and more than any here present, has borne the responsibility, and the anxiety, and the labour of conducting this Association. I propose the thanks of this meeting should be tendered to the man, who, born an Englishman, has adopted Scotland as his country—to the man, who, if he could stoop to profess the well-paid doctrines of 'the powers that be,' would soon, to borrow the language Mr. Montgomery has already applied to him, have his brow dishonoured by a mitre—to the man, who, like the Angel of Knowledge, has planted one foot on the Clyde and the other on dry land, and opening the book of life, has cried aloud to the people, 'read, and judge for yourselves'—the man who, from the pulpit and the press, has strenuously repelled the hosts of orthodoxy—the man who has persevered in his purpose amidst animosity, scorn, and opposition. We must honour him who firmly and calmly persists in effecting noble purposes in defiance of difficulty—who never despairs of the cause of truth and man—who, though he cannot command success, continues to do his duty, confiding the result to that wise and beneficent Power who is conducting all things to a benevolent and sublime issue."

The Resolution was received with acclamation, the Chairman proposing "one cheer more," which was cordially responded to. Thanks were then given to the Chairman, for the admirable manner in which he had presided over the lengthened but interesting meeting; and, at ten o'clock, the Rev. H. Clarke concluded with prayer.

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Remarks on Paine's Age of Reason, in a series of Letters addressed to the Readers of the Christian Pioneer.

LETTER IV.

MY CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,—Among the tokens by which Christianity has marked its progress down to the present day, by no means the least important is the literature of which it has been the creator. Whence mainly is it that the Greek and Roman nations are known to the bulk of the present generation? Few comparatively have seen with their own eyes, the ruined temples and mouldering walls, the yet living statue, and the deathless medal by which the existence of these nations is attested to the learned; but the writings of Homer and Cicero are read in our schools in the original, and in our cottages, translated into the vernacular tongue. Thus a testimony pervades the land, as constraining as it is silent. A belief in the existence of these nations, becomes a portion of the faith of youth, and from youth passes unchecked into all the subsequent periods of life, the force of which may be learned by imagining the wonder that the countenance would express at the boldness of the man who should venture to deny that there ever was an Athens for Pericles to sway, adorn, and enlighten, or a Rome for an Augustus to convert from brick into marble. In a degree, this wonder may be understood, from observing the face of a youth, who, having for months been engaged in deciphering the poetry of Homer, is, for the first time told, that modern criticism has rendered it doubtful, if the blind and wandering minstrel of his young fancies and young affections, is, after all, any thing more than a name. The works of the great men of antiquity, give, not only to them but the nations to whom they belonged, a living form and pressure, even now, when above two thousand years are gone, since they burned with the indignation of outraged patriotism, or the sacred flame of poetic fancy and emotion. We look upon or into their works, and think at once, and hold our thoughts like convictions, of those to whom the voice of ages has assigned them. A

similar effect would have taken place, as in fact it did take place, before it became the fashion to question their authenticity, in the instance of the several portions of the New Testament, but for the fact that doubts have been raised by the enemies of religion. These doubts have, as in the present case, called forth defences; sometimes the reply has been followed by a rejoinder, and the rejoinder led other combatants to gird on their armour, while, in the midst of this learned warfare, one thing became clearer than any other, at least to the short-sighted, that wherever truth was, much might be said on both sides! In this conclusion, the enemy's end was answered. Scepticism was what he aimed to produce, at least, if he could not occasion absolute unbelief. Now there is no subject, however certain in itself, in which the same result might not be brought about by ordinary dexterity in the use of the weapons of controversy. Most men think their senses good guides, and trust them implicitly in the business of life; but let a bold and skilful swordsman but wield his intellectual weapon, and soon would some doubt even of the existence of matter, and have serious questions if they were the same persons as they were a year previously, since no argument to prove their identity could be adduced, to which plausible if not solid objections might not be taken. Indeed it requires but little metaphysical skill, so to confound the understanding of the many, as to give in them a novel illustration of the words of Scripture, making them feel, that "seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand."

If, then, the concurrent voice, with here and there an exception, which, by its solitariness, serves only to make the many-tongued testimony seem more numerous and forcible—if the concurrent voice of antiquity assures the world, and justly, of the authenticity of the classic authors, and therein of the existence and institutions of the classic nations, I see not why a voice, equally concurrent at least, should not lead the mind from Matthew's Gospel to Matthew himself, and from the historian to him of whom he wrote and testified. I point then to our sacred books, as evidence, by their very existence, of Jesus and his doctrine; nor can a doubt of their authenticity be mooted, which would not bear equally hard, if hard at all, on the writings of the poets and statesmen of ancient days. Nay, we may bring the argument down nearer to our own times.

Who that has read *Paradise Lost*, has ever questioned the existence of Milton? Who that has read his noble defence of the liberty of the press, has questioned, that England was in his days governed by the Commons House of Parliament, and suffered nearly as much in the restriction of its liberty, as under the tyrant to whose power it succeeded? Who that has read the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, without a full conviction, that some time in the past, a person whose name was Gibbon, and whose mind was cultivated with learning, and perverted by scepticism, had lived, read, and wrote? And what unbeliever, when engaged in collecting weapons of assault from the pages of Voltaire or Paine, had not his mind imbued with the idea of the author as well as the work? Yet if you deny that Voltaire assailed religion in France, and Paine in England, what would the majority of their admirers have to reply? Would they point to their works? We point to the works of John and Paul. Would they plead the evidence of historians? The plea will serve us at least as well as them. Do they urge the notoriety of the fact, and chide the excess of scepticism, which arrays itself against the voice of many generations? The concession made in this appeal, will establish the very institutions, to the uprooting of which, they devote their lives. Do they as a last resort, have recourse to the quotations of the works of their leaders in scepticism, made by cotemporaneous and subsequent writers? Do they say, "here is a passage cited by one, and here a part explained by another"? The evidence is good, but no less good for Christians than for sceptics.

And this leads me to remark, that independently of the books of the New Testament, which are in themselves, by their very existence, proofs of the leading facts of Christianity, a literature has been created by the mission of Christ, which, taking it from the present hour, as we have done in the previous cases, leads up the mind to Jesus himself. The topic which I have now opened out, is of vast extent and great fertility. The impress of Christianity is marked most legibly in the literary productions of all nations in all ages, with whom it has come into contact. To say nothing of its influence on the general tone of literature in the present age, have we not our Cowper and our Young, in whose works, they who run may read; and the way-faring man, though a fool,

cannot mistake the multiplied evidences of the impregnation of the minds of these poets, if not with the pure spirit of Christ, yet with the spirit of a prevalent Christianity. Now I know of no age in which evidences of a similar nature might not be found. In every period, from the nineteenth to the second, if not to the first century, you may trace in the general style of literary productions, and specially in certain works more than commonly imbued with a religious spirit, in poetry, in oratory, in history, in theology, in metaphysics, in taste, in style, in the whole texture and spirit of the performance, the influence of a religion which can be identified with no other than the Gospel. It would be vain to attempt to adduce particular instances out of hosts of facts, that are scarcely outnumbered by the stars of heaven. Yet we may allude to one striking circumstance. In the second, and indeed in the first century, Gentile philosophy underwent an almost entire change. Principles were supported which had been unknown or reprobated. Efforts were made which indicated new zeal, as well as the tottering of an old cause. Pretensions were advanced, in which fiction laboured to do the work of reality, and in which an unintended homage was paid to an excellence that was denied in word, but acknowledged by the stronger and truer language of implication. A tone of spirituality, which soon degenerated into mysticism, spread itself over literary productions, making the fact plain, that what they were designed to counterfeit, and in counterfeiting oppose, was more purely spiritual, even than the lucubrations of Plato; while the wish that was evinced, to enlighten the many and reform the ignorant, proved beyond a doubt, that it was also more practical and benign than his instructions, who was said to have brought philosophy down from heaven to dwell among men. And thus the Eclectic philosophy, as the system to which I have alluded, was called, while it took, without express acknowledgment, the principles of Christ, and compounded them with those of Socrates, Aristotle, and Cicero, to frame a weapon wherewith to oppose Christ, has in fact furnished us with an evidence of the power of Christianity, while yet in its cradle, and as of its early power so of its early birth, till we are carried from the chair of philosophy to the manger and the cross.

You can enter few public or private libraries in this or any other civilized kingdom, but your eye is struck with

the sight of volumes, remarkable at once by their size and their sombre hue. Inquiry will inform you, that these are the works of the Christian fathers, consisting of pieces written in defence of Christianity, or in exposition of its principles, by Christian laymen, or Christian bishops, or heathen philosophers, converted to the doctrines of the cross; men, who, however, they may in some things fall short of the soundness and vigour of mind which distinguish this age, held in each successive period in which they lived, a high rank among the highest and best of the Christian or the heathen world. These are monuments which connect Christianity with Christ, and lead us from the nineteenth to the first century. In the state in which you behold them, the art of printing placed them in our libraries; and the discovery of that art, brought them from the silence of the monastery, and the frail keeping of parchment, where they had been for ages accumulating, as the stream of time came down with its deposits in each succeeding portion of its course. If you follow the leading of these hoary sages, they too will conduct you to the feet of Jesus. They constitute a main part of the literature to which Christianity has given birth, and stretch with a never-failing and broadly marked line, back into the first century. Indeed it is difficult to mark the spot which defines where the last of the Apostles ends, and where the first of the Fathers begins. As soon as the eye-witnesses of the Lord Jesus were taken from the earth, others warmed by love to God and Christ and man, assumed their stations with a view to carry on their work, and there they stand along, and as they come down a quickly thickening line of venerable men, giving a ceaseless testimony, and proclaiming with an unbroken voice, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. They are not of one country, but many; not of one tongue, not of one rank, not of one age; but they give one evidence, and so multifarious and vast are the details in which that voice is uttered, that, if by any calamity we should lose the myriads of myriads of copies of the New Testament which now exist throughout the world, the book could be reproduced from their writings, entire, almost to a verse.

And in moral, not to say political changes, how clearly is the progress of Christianity marked! True, its moral influence has been counteracted in each age

by many and powerful adverse influences; but it is equally true, that under its agency the world has made a certain though not unbroken progress till the present hour. Its right to the empire of the world, has often been acknowledged, when its claims have been practically neglected. Monarchs have done it a verbal homage, while they failed to give to Christ their heart. Legislators have said, "It is our Sun," while they chose to walk in the thick darkness of their own minds. We take their evidence, while we regret their inconsistency; for we are seeking for external homage, as well as internal excellence. We see the conquering Goth, after laying waste the power and pride of the Cesars, bow with humility before the unarmed ministers of the Christ of God, and reverently kiss the extended cross, while he sheathes his yet reeking sword; his men of valour and the herd of his all but numberless band, follow the example of their chief, and receive a spiritual yoke from the very people on whose necks they had cast the chains of civil servitude. Stretching a little farther back into antiquity, we behold temples converted into churches, and the revenues of heathen appropriated to the maintenance of Christian priests, while amid all the pomp of the mansion and the palace, and all the simple scenes of humbler life, ministers who call themselves by the name of Christ, hold the place not long before possessed by those who served Jupiter, Venus, and Apollo. And through all the outward changes, by which the aspect of civil and domestic life evinces, from the earliest date of Christianity, the existence in its bosom of a new and powerful leaven, there may also be seen a new creation in the soul and life, which not only carries us back to the feet of Jesus, but also assures us, that in him there was no guile, but a divine and most prolific power of moral excellence. Notwithstanding the wickedness of men, the world, it cannot be questioned, has received immeasurable benefit from the moral influence of Christianity. Ascend from this to the earliest period, and you will find its progress marked by a moral fertility, which by its richness, and loveliness, indicates, as a verdant line of country in a barren land, the streaming along of water below the surface of the soil. Public institutions, but more still private life, evince the existence of a moral power, which is identified with Christianity, by the effect it produces, and leads the mind's eye back to

"the way, the truth, and the life." Within the three first centuries, especially, are the workings of this moral power to be seen. There were miracles wrought in the heart, as great and striking, as those which Jesus did in the sealed eye, or the lifeless corpse. Virtue took the place of vice, benevolence of selfishness, self-sacrifice of self-interest. Moral courage was given to the timid, power of endurance to the meek. There was refinement instead of grossness of heart—there was hope towards God in those who had scarcely known even his name, and a confident expectation of eternal life, in persons who had feared they should be doomed to wander for ever on the banks of the fabulous Styx, or had renounced all idea of a hereafter, in consequence of the darkness in which it was shrouded, or the absurdities with which it was debased in the popular faith. These changes imply an adequate cause, and no where can their author be found, but in Jesus Christ. To him they lead, beyond him they lead not; before him they are not seen, and after him, though at various times varying in extent, they have not ceased to be. From these great moral changes, the mind is led at once to Christ. It sees in the first and second century, a wonderful and extensive growth of moral fertility and luxuriance. Old things are passed away: in how many hearts—in how many families, not to say nations, are all things of a sudden become new. "It is like the bursting out of spring, in bush, flower, and tree. The mind seeks the cause of this renovation. Why is winter gone—why spring come?" The thoughts wander in vain in quest of the cause, till they settle on the Sun of Righteousness. They turn to him, and find in his character, his doctrine, and his works, the illustration of his own sublime description—"I am the light of the world," and on him they fix and settle with mind and heart alike satisfied, at the result of the research.

(Letter IV. to be concluded in our next.)

On the Moral Constitution and History of Man.

CHAPTER IX.

IN the previous Chapter, we took a general view of the necessity and benefit of divine revelations to mankind in the early ages of the world, in respect even of the first elements of natural science, and still more so, in those of moral science or religion. We remarked, that from the

nature of the subject, this system of supernatural instruction and guidance, required to be continued longer in the case of religion than of other things, and that the Jewish Institute was the organ of it, not merely for the benefit of that nation, but for the benefit of the world, by preserving and propagating those principles of natural religion, which lie at the root of all morality, and consequently of all progress in civilization. Accustomed as we now are, to regard such principles as the easy deductions of reason, or the obvious dictate of common sense, we are apt to be insensible of the difficulty which men felt to acquire them, in the infant ages of the world. But the history of antiquity, proves this most distinctly to have been the fact. The traditions of the patriarchal age, had, indeed, been preserved in some degree among the Persians, although associated with many errors; but among the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, through whose channel the tide of civilization flowed downward to the inhabitants of Western Asia and Europe—all were immersed in the grossest idolatry and superstitions. And these—the two latter especially, were the influential nations, whose learning, customs, and empire, were to give a direction to the opinions and manners of all surrounding countries and succeeding ages. Amidst this mass of moral corruption and ignorance of true religion generally prevalent, the Jewish system was the little leaven which first resisted the demoralizing tendency, and afterwards spread a healthful fermentation of renovating principles in society.

It seems to have been the design of Providence, in furtherance and illustration of his general plan of education for the human race, to permit those nations who were to be the instructors of the world in *natural* science and arts, to lose almost entirely for a time, the knowledge of true *religion* and *morality*. The grand lesson to be acquired from this part of Providence, is, that man with capacities for great moral and intellectual improvement, can accomplish nothing of himself, without the continued aid of his Maker. By this lesson, mankind are taught their dependance on, and relation to the Deity; not only as their Creator, but as their Moral Governor. They are likewise taught a certain kind and degree of experience and of wisdom, which they could not otherwise have acquired—experience respecting good and evil, truth and error, God and man; on the knowledge of which, all that

is most important to the dignity of moral character and to the acquisition of true happiness depends. Such are the reasons, we may presume, why the Egyptians, Phenicians, Greeks, and Romans, were left to themselves in matters of religion; and why the Israelites were instructed with special care—the one cultivating natural arts and sciences as they could, the other devoted or rather kept to the study of moral science, whether they would or not; till, in fulness of time, the acquisitions of each should be blended together for the benefit of all. We say, all this was in furtherance and illustration of the original plan, by which mankind (as a general rule) were to be left to their own resources, and to the operation of fixed laws; but yet assisted so far as it was necessary to preserve or to excite sentiments which they might otherwise lose or be unable to find.

We have seen how the Jewish religion was, in this respect, the instrument of Providence for good in its day, and how it was more excellent than that of the Gentiles; but there is another point of view in which it is proper also to regard it, namely, in what respect it was defective and provisional, with respect to the destined progress of society. For it has happened, in this as in other similar matters, that men, from the force of habit and prejudice, cling to the customs and spirit of their forefathers, after they cease to be suitable to a more improved age; and thus, things which were once useful and promoted the progress of society, become an impediment to it.

One defective part of the Jewish institution, in this point of view, was, the number and importance of its ceremonies. Ceremony in morals, is nothing but a mean towards an end, or a substitute in point of *form*, to serve, when better cannot be had, for the *substance* of religion—a sort of homage rendered to it, which may preserve it in some esteem with the public, when the personal sentiment is as yet weak or malconformed. A ceremonial system is only suited to the infant state of society, and the power by which it is enforced, is that of mere arbitrary authority. It can neither appeal to reason, nor to justice, nor to a pure moral feeling, in support of its requirements. It regards the Deity as a hard and capricious Master, rather than as a kind Father or Friend.

Connected with this view, we are especially to regard one set of its ceremonies, namely, its *sacrifices*. There

has been a good deal of disputation about the origin of sacrifices. Whether they arose from the natural feelings and prejudices of mankind? or were of divine appointment, and whether they were originally *offerings* or *expiations*? We do not enter into these questions however, and our future remarks will be independent of them. It is sufficient to remark, that by the time of Moses and during the history of the Israelites and Jews, mankind had imbibed the idea (no matter how) that God was naturally (so to speak) of a severe and harsh character, and required to be moved by some external means to the exercise of mercy. The institutions of Moses recognised such a sentiment, and were adapted to it. Hence the maxim of his laws, even in regard to the most trifling matters, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the law to do them." In one sense, indeed, this may be said to be the maxim of all laws that ever were made; they denounce punishment against all who disregard their commandments. But in enlightened ages, the law discriminates between different degrees of offence, according to the motives or circumstances of the offender; it reserves to the chief of the state, the power of pardon and commutation; it gives the penitent the means of repairing his errors, in many cases, by pecuniary compensation, or fine,—and it is the glory of all modern lawgivers, that they take care to temper justice with mercy. But this was not the spirit of the Mosaic Law. It was stern and indiscriminate—not making allowance even for ignorance or inadvertence, on the more trifling matter of ceremony. Every offence required a special expiatory sacrifice or a periodical general sacrifice, in which it might be generally but still formally included.

Now we say, that this was a grovelling and defective spirit—the result of ignorance and barbarity. The adaptation of the Jewish law to this spirit of the times, was only an accommodation to circumstances—a temporary and provisional arrangement, to govern men by the means and motives of which they were susceptible. Some men must be deterred by the terror of such a law, from infringing its precepts; and when they had offended and were penitent, they required to be soothed by some special and palpable token of the remission of their sins—that is to say, by an *atonement* for it. They were incapable of being influenced by the principle of love, and of a willing

obedience to a paternal and benevolent Deity; and for that reason, they could have no confidence in his mercy, without some sensible token of it.

I have said, that this was the spirit of the people and of the times; and the institute of a severe law, and of sacrificial atonements, was adapted to it. But it is evident by the writings of the Prophets, that so far from it being the design of Providence to train the spirit of mankind to such a system, it was the constant aim of those inspired teachers to raise men above it. Accordingly, they are unceasing in the declarations and praises of the spontaneous mercy of God, as “enduring for ever”—“that as a father pitied his children, so the Lord pitied those that feared him; remembering their frame, that they were but dust,” &c. At other times, the Prophets reprobate the idea of men recommending themselves to the favour of God by ceremonies, and declare, that “to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of lambs”—“to what purpose, saith the Lord, is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me; I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats—they are a trouble to me, I am weary to bear them; wash you, make you clean, cease to do evil, learn to do well: such are the sacrifices with which I am pleased.” What can be more evident from such passages as these, which abound in the Prophets, that it never was the design of the Deity, either in instituting or in legalizing sacrificial atonements, to teach, that he required *to be made merciful* by such means? Quite the contrary; they were intended to *assure those penitents*, who, from their ignorance and superstition, were fearful and incredulous on the subject, that he was innately merciful, and ready to forgive sin when it was forsaken, and when the ways of the sinner were amended. And this assurance was given them in a manner suited to their capacities, prejudices, and customs. But when such external token was relied upon, without reference to the moral qualifications of the worshippers, expressed or understood—or when it was supposed to have any thing in itself gratifying to, or influential with, God—or when it impeded or deteriorated any moral duty or feeling of a higher order, *then* it was completely perverted from the design of God, in condescending to authorise it.

But although the doctrine of the Prophets thus furnished a key to open and explain the ritual of the law,

yet, in point of fact, the people never fully or generally comprehended their doctrine. They were not yet capable of it. They were yet *children*, as regarded the age of the world or of society. This is not only manifest from their history, but the idea is distinctly noticed by Paul, who was himself at one time deeply imbued with the same spirit; and, upon his authority, we know it to have been the prevailing spirit of his countrymen, even at and after the commencement of the Christian era. "The heir," says he, "as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, being under government; even so we, when we were *children*, were in *bondage* under the elements of the world; and even yet, ye turn again unto the weak and beggarly elements, desiring again to be in bondage. Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years."

Mankind have always shown a lingering attachment to old forms and ideas; and that is an incidental evil, arising out of the circumstances of any arbitrary custom or obscure idea, having at any time received the sanction or countenance of divine authority; or even the sanction of men, who were on other accounts entitled to reverence. Shall we therefore conclude, that it would have been better that such things, being of no value, or equivocal and unmeaning in themselves, had never received any such countenance or sanction? No: we must judge of such things by their utility and effects at the time they were appointed or suffered. If they did good at such time, they were necessary and adapted to the age. Men could not comprehend or be influenced, by more enlightened principles. Yet this is no excuse for us, who know, or should know, better things, to remain attached to obsolete customs and ideas.

We think this remark proper, to justify the ways of Providence; but our concern at present is chiefly with the fact—namely, that although the Jewish Institute, as a whole—combining the doctrine of the prophets with the laws and the rites of Moses—was calculated to lead the Israelites forward to higher and purer sentiments than might strike its subjects at first view, yet from the natural prejudices and sluggishness of the human mind, the people generally adhered to the more gross and literal view of it. And the sentiment thereby engendered, and in reference to the relation in which men stood to their Maker, was this,—“that he was a hard Master, difficult to please,

and who had subjected them to an inexorable law, which it was in fact impossible to obey on all points—a God, whose favour could only be propitiated by bloody sacrifices, costly gifts, and the mediation of priests.” Practically speaking, this was the spirit of the Jewish system—capable enough of awing men into obedience, so far as regards the obvious precepts of justice and the arbitrary commands of authority, but engendering sentiments of *fear* and *superstition* in regard to the Deity, and stinting their social morality to what men were compelled to do by public law, or induced only to do from motives of selfishness.

The Jew—the man governed by the spirit of his age and of his country, stood thus and prayed with himself—“God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this or another neighbour of mine. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all I possess, I perform all my sacrifices and oblations, I observe the Sabbath and the new moons, and all the ceremonies of thy appointment, or of the traditions of the elders.” This was the orthodox Jew of his day, “concerning the *literal* righteousness of his law, blameless;” but an utter stranger to the charity which thinketh no evil—to the benevolence which is ever active in doing good—to the humility which is so pleasing to God, and so suitable to the worshippers of God. In perfect consistence with his idea of sanctity and justice, this man might still be injurious to, and a persecutor of those who differed from him in their faith and customs; he might contend with every man to the utmost for his legal rights; he might give uncontrolled expression to the feelings of his anger; refuse to forgive offences; turn a deaf ear to the prayer of the needy; in short, care for nothing which was not forced upon him by the fears of superstition, or by the terror of the law.

Such were the religious and moral sentiments of the age, even in this favoured nation. The same cause produced similar effects in the contemporary nations of antiquity, but aggravated by their grosser ignorance, and by the want of that restraint and regulation which the laws of Moses imposed. The root of the whole evil, was the false idea of God, as being a tyrant or a hard and capricious master; and this was rendered so much worse among the heathen, because they not only imputed an arbitrary authority and

unrelenting justice to him (or to *them*, for in general they believed in Polytheism), but they likewise imputed passions and vices which would have degraded humanity.

SALTCOATS, August, 1832.

W. B.

The Unitarian Christian's View of the Recent Measures of Reform.—A Discourse, by the Rev. J. R. Beard.

LUKE, XXII. 53, "But this is your hour and the power of darkness."

THESE words were uttered near the close of our Lord's eventful life. He had been betrayed, had suffered the agony of the garden, was in the power of his enemies, and saw quickly coming on the indignities of the judgment hall, and the tortures of the cross. It was night to him, it was the hour of the evil one, it was the power of darkness. Look at Jesus in that hour. He stands alone in the midst of a frowning world; some friends even have abandoned, one betrayed, and others are about to deny and forsake him. His persecutors have compassed their wicked ends. They have him safe in their toils, and already they prepare the worst of disgrace and torture which the abuse of power, aided by depravity of heart, could devise. Look at the man in this awful crisis. There is no one earthly light amid the thick darkness. All is gloom and terror. His enemies have and enjoy their hour; darkness triumphs in its awful power. Yet what calm dignity invests his brow. His is the only eye that looks serenely bright on the falling storm. There is agitation and perplexity and fierceness in the faces of his enemies. Jesus stands in the midst, with his inward peace beaming mildly around him, and so full of self-possession is he, that he even arraigns those who had come to apprehend him,—
 "Why are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me; but this is your hour and the power of darkness." There is both force and beauty of meaning in these words. They imply the serenity of the Saviour's breast, they imply a confidence in the Providence of God, and in the issue of the painful scenes of which his apprehension was the herald. This is your hour. I yield, for so it must be. It is the power of darkness, so has my Father ordered it in the unerring determinations of his love and wisdom. It is your hour,

but mine approaches—morning succeeds to night, and mid-day crowns the morn. Your hour is one of darkness, but mine, which even now cometh, will bring the light of joy and triumph to me and all my faithful friends. Which is preferable—the lot of Jesus, or that of his enemies? God, truth, and peace are on the one side—evil, and a triumph on the other. In the actual circumstances, Jesus, the good man feels, is an object of envy—his persecutors, of abhorrence. Yes, you would prefer the condition of Jesus with its pain, to that of the Jews with their success. But all comparison ceases, when the mind goes forward to the results of the actual hour, and witnesses the personal wailing of the conscience-smitten priest, and the desolation of abomination standing in all the holy and lovely places of a ruined nation, on the one side—and the risen and glorified Saviour on the other, with knees bending and hearts glowing in homage to him, wherever there are minds to think and feel.

It does seem to be out of the order of Divine Providence, that individuals, however humble their condition, however noiseless and retired the tenor of their life, should be free from alternations, in kind resembling those which Jesus himself underwent. In external condition—in the feelings of the heart—there are, in our chequered life, hours of darkness as well as of light. To-day the heavens are clear and bright, but with the morrow comes a heavy and far-spreading cloud. Or, the brightest bosom may suffer an obscuration, and the sufferer himself know scarcely, if at all, the quarter whence, or the cause by which the darkness came. Those who bear the domestic as well as the social relations, especially if the bonds of these relations are numerous and endearing, are ever liable to have a cloud overspread their sunny hours and days, which is fraught with greater heaviness to them by reason of the worth and tenderness of the attachment, whose end it darkly portends or mournfully announces. Yet, though darkness prevails, it is but for a night; joy cometh in the morning, for so has God ordered events, and so has he framed the human bosom, that the reign of darkness is but for an hour when compared with the duration of the bright and happy scenes of life. Much, indeed, in this, as in the whole drama of human life, depends on the sufferer himself. Is the cause in which he suffers, a righteous one? A righteous cause is a staff to uphold, and a

balm to comfort. Is it maintained in a righteous manner? Failure, then, may be more pleasant than success evilly gotten; and hardly can there come a disaster but will be retrieved, nor a pain endured but will be repaid by a ten-fold pleasure. It is an honour to suffer in a holy, though unsuccessful enterprise. The generous heart beats high with its proud consciousness of merit, and its steadfast reliance on the God of rectitude. There are men who cling to an unsuccessful cause, and serve it nobly, but feel their powers flag and their interest wane the moment it is carried on to victory.

Feelings such as these have supported the noble few who, in all ages, have upheld the sacred rights of truth and justice, against the enemies of reason and mankind. In these was the martyr's strength. They nerved the patriot's arm. A Servetus and a Priestley felt their powerful impulses; and they prompted the efforts which have recently given the means of regeneration to our native land. With justice the regenerators covered themselves as with a shield, and with justice they framed the weapons of their assault, and thereby their arm was clothed with power, and their breast pervaded with tranquillity and hope. If they perished, they perished while fighting the battle of truth and humanity. If they perished, the influence of their efforts survived, and at least they were adding their voice to the accumulating accents transmitted from age to age in long succession, by which, in due time, the walls of corruption and error would not fail to be thrown to the ground. They felt indeed, that their lot was cast in the hour of darkness, but they felt also that day follows night in the moral as well as the physical world. The sacred conviction of the goodness of their cause, and the anticipation of a certain, though it might be a tardy triumph, braced up the loins of their minds; they were strong, and quitted themselves like men. True, that triumph they might never see with eyes of flesh and blood, yet could they enjoy the triumph of principles, which, they believed, had God for their author, and the good of man for their consequence. They fought against error, not the erring; they fought for truth, not a party; and, therefore, they had no wish for the triumph which men of little minds feel in the overthrow of their opponents, but saw in imagination the travail of their souls, when they saw the light of day chasing from the social

hemisphere the darkness which error loves, and in which vice is propagated.

It happens in other cases besides that of Jesus, that the hour of light follows closely on the hour of darkness. Providence would appear to choose sudden transitions, perhaps to startle men from their quiescence, and make them feel the agency of Him whom they are so apt to overlook; to vindicate to himself the government of the world, by making the most unpromising and untoward agents serve his purposes. See, is the import of his silent language, "See, it is I that govern and overrule, for out of darkness itself I bring forth light. Where thou mortal sawest only grief, I place joy, and where thou mournedst at desolation, I call up fertility and abundance." Have we not, my friends, been permitted to see something of this nature? How recently were we all ready to exclaim—"it is your hour and the power of darkness"? But of a sudden the cloud passed away, the sun shone forth in more than wonted splendour, and now the land is covered with the heat thereof. And shall not we, on an occasion so full of promise, take up the language of joyful exultation? Shall not we shout aloud for the joy and hope which pervade our breasts? The enemy of good government, has received a blow. Spiritual wickedness in high places, is brought into discredit. Corruption here stands at bay, and there is taken and slain. The reign of patronage, which means the reign of bribery on the one side, and extortion on the other, is drawing to its close. Wars will be fewer, if they do not altogether cease, for the gratification of malignant passions, and the aggrandisement of a proud few on the degradation of the oppressed and slavish many; and if the sword must be unsheathed, let it be in the cause of justice, of suffering humanity, of liberty against despotism, and of light against darkness. There is now hope for our native land, and in that hope a promise of good things to the whole world: there is hope of that entire but gradual renovation, which is imperatively needed to just the institutions of our country into harmony with the wants and feelings which have resulted from new and improved modes of life and thought; there is hope of an enlargement of the sphere of commercial enterprise, and therein of the means of subsistence and comfort to thousands, who are now living on the very edge of starvation; there is hope of a moral elevation through all ranks and

orders of men in the nation—the labourer will cease to be tempted by, or prove himself superior to, the corrupting fascination of a bribe—the rich will be emancipated from the debasement of seeking the objects of their honourable ambition or narrow selfishness, by the purchase of others, and the sale of themselves, in a degraded commerce of political influence. To how many will a recent event impart the dignity of conscious freedom, and the resolution of an elevated bearing, in the social commonwealth. The chains of their disqualification have fallen around them, and they walk forth with the feeling of a new and better life; and amid the thoughts which the duties of their new position inspires, that holds a prominent place which respects the full and proper discharge of their important obligations. In these emotions there is ground for exultation, for there is peace in the present, and the future is full of promise. It tells of the affairs of this great nation being under the direction of reason and integrity, instead of corrupt patronage, and gives a happy presage of a new era. Amid our emotions of triumph and anticipation, shall we not take special care to mingle a devout and ardent acknowledgment of the hand of God? His providential control has gotten us the victory. We owe it neither to royal munificence, nor to the rare integrity of a few truly noble minds, so much as to the peculiar concurrence of events, which, in bringing on an eventful crisis, roused as by the very voice of God, a whole people, to give expression to that voice in the expression of its own irresistible will. Here was the power that smote the factious with impotence, unsealed the eye of him whose will has proved itself law, and girded with power those immortal patriots under whose auspices the people have achieved a victory as peaceful as it is important. And in the very instruments by which the victory has been gained, is there a ground of hope, that a new order of things is about to commence its happy course. Of old, force was the weapon used both to maintain and to uproot existing corruptions. No event at all approaching in importance to the one we are now delineating, has ever been brought about by the agency of reason. A principle of Christianity has been illustrated, and a triumph for Christianity partly gained and partly prepared; for the weapons of our warfare have not been carnal, but the sword of the spiritual man has proved mighty through the providence of God,

to the pulling down of strong holds, and the casting down of the imaginations which exalted themselves against all that is called good and is really venerable.

As a principle of Christianity has been illustrated, so has a Christian work been begun, which will, I trust, be carried on to speedy and entire completion: the work, I mean, of moral renovation. The system that is past, I hated chiefly because it engendered vice—foul vice in the many, who were degraded into paid tools of the few, and in the few who drove a trade in moral degradation. This I trust we have effectually changed. A new principle has of late been introduced into the science of politics, which they call honesty. Already is the homage great which has been paid to it; and in the new measures which will soon take effect, new triumphs will be reaped and new laurels won. What Christian, thinking of these things, does not thank God and take courage for the future. The triumph of good principles of government, is the triumph of Christianity; for it is the triumph of right over wrong, of reason over brute force, of freedom over servitude, of integrity over the banded upholders of corruption, of civil and therein of moral corruption. In this triumph, I for one rejoice, yea and will rejoice; while I add my earnest prayer, that the hopes which the present awakens, may not only be never disappointed, but receive a full and speedy and lasting realization.

(To be Concluded in our next.)

REVIEW.

1. *Unitarianism the Religion of the Bible; an Address to the Hearers of the Rev. H. Dalton. By S. Hunter, Minister of the Unitarian Congregation, Wolverhampton.*
2. *Unitarianism Unmasked; a Letter to the Congregation of St. John's Church, Wolverhampton, occasioned by an Address, entitled, Unitarianism the Religion of the Bible. By the Rev. Henry Dalton, A. B.*
3. *Unitarianism Vindicated. A Second Address to the Hearers of the Rev. Henry Dalton, in reply to a Letter of that Reverend Gentlemen, to the Congregation of St. John's, Wolverhampton, entitled, Unitarianism Unmasked. By Stephenson Hunter.*

MR. DALTON, whose kindly interest in the spiritual welfare of persons of his own persuasion, is worthy of all

praise, exercises but little Christian feeling towards those unhappy recusants, who scruple to believe and pray according to the rules of England's pure and primitive Church! Alarmed by the progress which Unitarian sentiments were making under the able ministry of Mr. Hunter, but, at the same time, fearful of meeting the enemy hand to hand, he attempted to stifle the obnoxious principles by the very common, but not very honourable, methods of secret calumny and public vituperation. He denounced Unitarians as "heirs of certain perdition, wretches of whose salvation there could be no hope;" warned his hearers against associating with such heretics in the ordinary intercourses of social life, and parents against allowing their children to imbibe the first principles of literary knowledge from Unitarian teachers; describing persons of this persuasion as "rejectors of the authority of Scripture, and deniers of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Mr. Hunter, deeming it his duty to repel such charges, addressed a mild expostulation to the reverend calumniator, requesting either an acknowledgment or denial of these uncharitable imputations.

The following was Mr. Dalton's *courteous* reply:

"To Mr. Stephenson Hunter.—Sir, I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and, in reply, to state, that I have, and with God's blessing ever shall continue, to warn my people against Unitarianism, commonly so called, as an unscriptural and ungodly heresy.—I remain, Sir, &c. HENRY DALTON."

This letter, and the slanders which it virtually admits to have been promulged by the writer, were animadverted on by Mr. Hunter, in an able pamphlet: "Unitarianism the Religion of the Bible, addressed to the hearers of the Rev. Henry Dalton." The writer gives a clear and scriptural explication of the Unitarian Christian's faith, vindicates him from the charge of denying either Jesus or his Gospel, and claims for him, at least honesty of intention, if not purity of creed.

"You have heard, my Christian brethren, Unitarian Christians charged with contempt or disregard for the authority of the Scriptures. But of all the calumnious charges with which they are assailed, this is perhaps the most unfounded. Abandon or disregard the Scriptures! This would, indeed, be theological suicide. The Unitarian uses, with regard to himself, the words which the great Chillingworth applied more generally, *the Bible, the Bible alone, is his religion*; the only recognised rule of his actions, and the only standard of his faith; his support in adversity, and his consolation in sorrow; the source of the purest

happiness he enjoys on earth; and the basis of all the hopes which he entertains for eternity. He holds no doctrine which he cannot express in the clear and intelligible language of revelation, and he rejects none, but such as he considers opposed to the testimony of the Sacred Writings. The Church of Scotland may refer inquirers after her religious principles, to her Confession of Faith; the Church of England may direct them to her creeds, and homilies, and articles; and the Methodists may desire them to consult the writings of John Wesley; but the Unitarian can only refer them to the Bible. For it he has no substitute; to it he bows with the humblest deference; and to it he clings as the anchor of his hopes.”—p. 6.

“The real origin of the charge which is brought against Unitarian Christians, of rejecting the authority of the Scriptures, is this:—Though they treat the Sacred Writings with as much respect and veneration as any other class of professing Christians, they will not receive human interpretations of them with equal respect. They read and understand them for themselves. They receive the inspired Writings as an infallible rule of faith and practice, but they will not place creeds of human composition on the same footing.”—p. 8.

“Unitarians hold their opinions firmly, because they are convinced of their truth; and they endeavour, by every fair and Christian means, to convince those whom they believe to be in error; but to denounce them as the ‘enemies of God, ungodly heretics, heirs of certain perdition,’ because they cannot see with their eyes, nor worship by their creed, is a degree of spiritual pride and unchristian intolerance, which modern evangelicism retains entirely to itself, and to which Unitarian Christianity desires ever to remain a stranger.” “And should not the motives by which the Unitarian must necessarily be governed, in the adoption of his distinguishing opinions, secure to him at least the respect and forbearance of his fellow-Christians? He can have no motive for his dissent from the popular faith, save a *sincere love of truth*. The professors of another creed may be dazzled by the rewards which a zealous defence of it may secure for them; but the reward of the Unitarian’s zeal, like that of the great Master whom he serves, has generally been only contempt, and reproach, and persecution. No rich living, no high patronage, no popular applause, sustains him under the trials and labours of his humble ministry; no mitre hovers in the distance, to animate his zeal and invigorate his exertions. If he look for a reward, it must be in a higher state of being; if he seek applause, it must be the soul-sustaining approval of conscience, pronounced upon his humble exertions in disseminating the spirit and doctrines of the Gospel.”—p. 4.

To this sober and dignified appeal to his reason and his charity, Mr. Dalton replied in a pamphlet, entitled, “Unitarianism Unmasked.” We have rarely perused 28 pages more unworthy the pen of a Christian or a man. What

are we to think of a minister of the Gospel of peace and brotherhood, who angrily rebukes a joint-labourer in the vineyard of the Lord, for having dared to address his fellow-men, as *Christian Brethren*? Mr. Dalton—the good, the pious, and the charitable—ex-chaplain of the most holy of our temporal lords, blushes not to charge a brother minister with presumption or hypocrisy, in giving to the readers of his “Address,” the title of *fellow-Christians*! But hear his own words:

“Are we to compliment each other into Christianity? So indeed it should seem, since we are gravely told, that the Trinitarian and the Unitarian have, after all, so much in common, that they should complacently look upon each other as Christian brethren; or, at most, consider themselves as different classes of Christians. To all this affectation of Christian charity, it is sufficient to reply, that if we, my beloved flock, are *consistent* Trinitarians, we cannot thus lightly [*charitably?*] hold our faith. We cannot, without the greatest absurdity, recognise Unitarianism as having any right or title to the fellowship of Christianity. We cannot consent *meanly* to betray the bulwarks of our faith; we altogether deny, that Christian fellowship or brotherhood *can* subsist between those who have not, nor even profess to have, ‘one Lord, one faith, one baptism.’”—p. 5.

In the remainder of the pamphlet, which thus *auspiciously* commences, Mr. Dalton endeavours to establish his former charges, that Unitarians reject the Bible, and deny Christ; and attempts to prove that the Scriptures contain ample authority for the doctrines of the Trinity, Supreme Deity and worship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In this portion, however, there is nothing new; and Mr. Hunter, in a second address, “Unitarianism Vindicated,” has but to fight a battle in which many before him have triumphed.

He informs his opponent, that the title of his pastoral letter, “Unitarianism Unmasked,” is peculiarly inappropriate:

“Unitarian Christianity wears no mask, assumes no disguise, seeks no concealment, but proclaims its principles to the world; courts inquiry, and flourishes just in proportion to the strictness of the scrutiny to which it is subjected.”—p. 4.

Mr. Hunter explains why he had denominated his readers, fellow-Christians:

“I called you fellow-Christians, and I still address you as Christian brethren, because I regard you as worshippers of the same God, servants of the same Divine Master, and heirs of the same promises as myself. I called you Christian brethren, because I believed you to be so, notwithstanding our differences of opinion; for I am convinced, that you as sincerely and conscien-

tiously believe the principles you profess, as I do mine; and that such sincerity will ever recommend the virtuous Christian to the favour of Him who looketh on the heart, and requireth truth and sincerity in the inward parts.”—p. 6.

Mr. Hunter then proceeds to vindicate Unitarian Christianity, from the charge of failing in veneration for the authority of the Bible. His vindication is complete, and equally satisfactory is the reasoning by which he exposes the falsity and unscripturality of the doctrines of Trinitarianism; and from a review of the passages adduced by Mr. Dalton, in proof of these doctrines, proves that they are utterly inconsistent with the great and leading truth of the Bible and Bible Christianity, that “there is but one God, THE FATHER.”

Towards the close of his pamphlet, Mr. Hunter proposes the following queries:—

“Mr. Dalton calls himself a Trinitarian; will he have the goodness to state, for your edification and mine, which of all the Trinities he holds? Am I to consider him a Nominalist or a Realist? Does he embrace the Ciceronian Trinity, or the Cartesian Trinity, or the Platonic Trinity, or the Aristotelian Trinity, or the Trinity of the Mobile? Does he believe with Dr. Wallis and the University of Oxford, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are no more three distinct intelligent persons, than the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, are three Gods? Or with Dr. Sherlock, Bishop of London, that the three persons of the Trinity, are as much three distinct infinite minds, as Peter, James, and John, are three men? an opinion which the University before mentioned, decreed to be false, impious, and heretical. Does he believe with the Athanasian creed, that the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty, and yet there are not three Almighties, but one Almighty? Or with Dr. Burnet, that the Son and the Holy Ghost are created beings, and are Gods only by the indwelling of the Father’s Godhead? Or with Bishop Gastrell, that the Father includes the whole idea of God and something more; that the Son includes the whole idea of God and something more; and that the Holy Ghost includes the whole idea of God and something more; while all together, they make one complete God and nothing more? Or does he believe with Bishop Burgess, that the Father is a person, but not a being; the Son is a person, but not a being; and the Holy Ghost is a person, but not a being: and that these three personal nonentities make one perfect being? As it is evident, that each of these Rev. and Right Rev. Fathers believed in a Trinity of his own construction, perhaps Mr. DALTON will inform us which of them held the true orthodox Trinity, and how many of them were ‘infidels and blasphemers’?”—p. 26.

To these questions, Mr. Dalton has not yet vouchsafed

a reply. He has shrunk from a controversy which he himself provoked; he has been driven from the arena of open and *avowed* discussion; and if he has since taken refuge under the shelter of a fictitious name, he has the satisfaction of knowing, that such is *consistent* conduct in one who has covered himself with a robe of shame, by vending misrepresentations and disseminating slander.

To the prayer with which Mr. Hunter closes his "Address," we most cordially say, amen. "May He who rules amid the hosts of heaven and the powers of earth, make this and every such discussion, subservient to the development and establishment of truth." G. F.

An Appeal to the Members of the Bible Society, by the Rev. J. W. Philips.

Correspondence between the Professional Committee.

Brief Remarks upon Doctor Fletcher's Defence, &c.

The Bible Society Question, &c. by the Rev. S. C. Wilks, A. M.

Two Letters on the Constitution and Proceedings of the Bible Society, by C. S. Dudley.

The Lawfulness of the Constitution of the Bible Society, from "the Christian Observer."

It appears desirable to give a little attention to some of the numerous pamphlets that have been written on this subject, that those Unitarians who have not had the opportunity of seeing them, may learn in what light they are viewed by other denominations. The anti-christian spirit which pervades these publications, appears well calculated to lead the Unitarian to rejoice that "he has not so learned Christ," and to feel an increased attachment to his own opinions, from the conviction, that they never create similar feelings of bitterness towards those who are opposed to him. The Bible Society, which for twenty-eight years has met with but few interruptions to its prosperity or peacefulness, has during the last year been divided on the question, whether it is, or is not expedient to allow Unitarians to continue members of it. The proposition to expel them was rejected by a vast majority; and the Secession Society, which in consequence was formed, has already suffered from dissensions among themselves.

The virulence, bigotry, and intolerance which were ex-

cited by the discussion in the Parent Society, prove that a strong party-spirit may exist without an atom of the pure spirit of Christianity, and that there may be an appearance of forbearance, without its being produced from Christian motives. To quote the words of one of the writers, "If the author be a minister of Christ, we expect Christian meekness, and that he who comes forth publicly as a servant of the lowly Jesus, will exhibit himself in that character which he professes to hold." Whether this expectation has been realized, may be decided by the following quotations from those writers who have urged the "purification of the Society," by the expulsion of the unbelieving "Socinians."

"In the face of Christendom, the Bible Society must now either sanction the union of professing Christians and acknowledged unbelievers, in one religious body, and affirm that the infidel Socinian possesses a valid claim to the denomination of Christian, and deliberately ratify by its verdict the appalling fact, that in these days the blasphemer of our Lord Jesus, may be associated with his disciples in a religious work; or with alacrity and promptitude it must disclaim the unhallowed alliance, repel the odious charge brought against it, and wipe away the foul stain, by formally and finally casting off Socinianism, and every other specious infidelity."

"They will now, by a formal and deliberate verdict, sanction the validity of the Socinian's claims to be classed with the other denominations of Christians. These persons who by the unanimous voice of the church of Christ, in all past ages, have been excluded from its pale, by the decision of the united body of different Christian denominations, will be triumphantly admitted within that pale."

"The real injury Socinians would have to sustain, would be, in point of fact, only this, the reproach which would be cast upon them by the Christian world; and this I believe it to be the duty of Christians to cast upon them, in the spirit at least, if not the very letter of that command, 'note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.'"

"A belief in the Divine authority of the Scriptures, (whether it reveals Christ, or Moses, is all one to the Socinian,) may entitle a man to be called a Deist; but what if many parts are not believed, as is the case by Socinians!"

"What delightful unity can subsist between infidel So-

cinians and believers, I know not; we might as well talk of unity between light and darkness, life and death, truth and falsehood, blasphemy and piety, as between the members of Christ, and the members of Satan."

"..... virtually assign the name, community, and privileges of Christians, to the men who deny the godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore denounce him as a blasphemer! Under the control of these enemies of Christ, the concerns of this institution may now be placed; under the taint of this pestilential heresy, the whole system of the Bible Society may yet be moulded; and the professed object of circulating the Oracles of the living God, may become the channel through which the tide of infidelity shall roll onward, till the last vestige of vital godliness be swept away, and the last landmarks of Christian truth be destroyed."

Many remarks naturally suggest themselves on these quotations, but we refrain, and proceed to give a few extracts from those writers who have ventured to raise a voice to prevent the expulsion of the Unitarians. Well may they desire to be spared from such "tender mercies," for though two such passages as follow, may excite the hope that here we shall be gladdened by some display of Christian charity; yet how soon is it destroyed by those which succeed.

"Let us use no weapons, but those of truth, and while we assail errors, let us beware of that acrimony of spirit and language, which would only promote them. I am quite sure that some of the speeches and publications, in opposition to the Bible Society, have had this effect: the Socinian has had it to say, that instead of being reasoned with, out of the Scriptures, he has been vituperated, and not treated with the kindness or common courtesy due from one man to another."

"Why use towards them such asperity of language, as can only lead to a recoil in their favour?" The same writer continues:—"It is not very desirable to stop this gigantic machinery, just to brush off a few flies that may chance to infringe upon it, with much likelihood of crushing themselves amidst its wheels, but none whatever of impeding its mighty evolutions."

"They have been made too much of. What could be so likely to add to their importance, as to tell them and all mankind, what is without a shadow of truth, that the

great majority of what is called [admirable distinction!] the religious world, have embraced them as brethren."

"Whoever says that the Society has publicly pronounced Socinians to be Christians, is under a grievous mistake; the Society has never done any such thing."

Oh! no, that would indeed be a degree of charity far beyond what the most liberal could endure. Unitarians may be ridiculed for worshipping at "the tinsel shrine of liberalism;" but they feel that they have never been empowered, nor have they the wish, to fulminate the thunders of excommunication. Strange infatuation! that men should think they prove their zeal for God, by exhibiting a want of charity to their fellow creatures.

Unitarians are styled "the most inconsistent of mortals," if they do join the Bible Society; yet they are charged with "want of attachment to the Bible, because they are not oftener found in its ranks;" and it is also said, "after what has passed, that they should cheerfully continue their support, would indeed be extraordinary." And again, "the strict rule of no comment, has been violated in such a way that no Socinian can feel comfortable in joining us, or honestly tolerate the headings of the chapters; and he cannot give it his sanction, without tampering with his conscience. The headings and marginal notes are a stumbling-block to him, which must utterly preclude his willing circulation of the Bible Society copies." For this concession we heartily thank the author; yes, the headings of the chapters, and not the text itself, are opposed to the Unitarian doctrine. The following are some of the harsh epithets that abound in these pamphlets. Unitarians are styled "avowed enemies of the Saviour;" "acknowledged infidels," "who cannot bear prayer," "to whom the name of Jesus is an offence;" "scorners and dissemblers;" "God requires from his people to be separate from sinners;" "misguided men who blaspheme the name of his Son;" "whom an inspired Apostle declares to be a deceiver and antichrist." "The Jew and the Mohometan," are said "to admit as much sound theology, or thereabouts, as the Socinian"—"he rejects in his own circulation, some most undoubted portions"—"he is wont to mistranslate and mystify, to suit his heterodox opinions"—"soul-destroying errors"—"horrible heresy of infidel Socinianism"—"to suppose for a moment, that those who cast contempt on the high character of the Son, can be capable of piety!"

"The Socinian's distaste of Christian principles and Christian spirit;" perhaps it may be thought that other denominations are more deficient in this essential qualification of the Christian character.

It is sufficiently apparent from the tenor of these passages, which are but a small portion of what might have been selected, had not the subject already occupied too much space, that the co-operation of the Unitarian is only endured, not desired, and the motives for wishing to retain him are not disguised.

"Were they expelled, they would have enlarged funds, as well as an ample excuse for sending out their obnoxious publications." "I rejoice," adds the writer, "at every guinea got out of such funds."

The Society glories in having circulated the Scriptures far and wide; well would it have been, had the members themselves first imbibed their sacred contents, and remembered those beautiful injunctions they contain against harsh judgments, and uncharitable censures: but alas! they "know not what manner of spirit they are of." Unitarians can say, with the Apostle, "that to them, it is a small thing to be judged of man's judgment; but he that judgeth him is the Lord." They will not return railing for railing, but rather adopt the language of Scripture, and say, "why dost thou judge thy brother, or why dost thou set at nought thy brother, for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ." "Speak not evil one of another, brethren." "There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who art thou that judgest another?"

Unitarianism has nothing to fear from such attacks as these, it is founded on a rock; and innoxious will the darts of calumny, and powerless will the arrows of fanaticism fall around it. The evenenomed shafts may wound those who hurled them; but the glorious panoply of truth in which it is enveloped, will prove an all-sufficient protection against such assaults. Let Unitarians endeavour to dash down the buckler with which fanaticism strives to intercept their efforts; let them try to break through the thick armour in which bigotry envelopes its victims, and to shiver in pieces the weapons which intolerance opposes; and if armed with "the sword of the spirit, the shield of faith, the breast-plate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation, and the whole armour of God," they need not fear their most powerful opponents.

M.

Illustrations of Political Economy.—No. 7, A Manchester Strike; and No. 8, Cousin Marshall. By Harriet Martineau. Charles Fox, London.

IN these admirable tales, Miss Martineau follows out, with equal talent and perseverance, her wise and benevolent purpose, which aims at no less an object than to enlighten men as to their most important interests; to make them acquainted with the true means of securing and augmenting the sum of individual and social happiness. We have already so fully expressed our opinion as to the merits of this series of tales, and the singular talents of the accomplished writer, that all we can now require to do, is to introduce, very briefly, to the notice of our readers, the present numbers of this agreeable work.

We may observe generally, that some disappointment will probably be experienced on their perusal, by those to whom a chief attraction of these tales has been their dramatic spirit and variety, the force and liveliness of their sketches of natural scenery, their rich assemblage of character, or the truth and animation of their groupes. As mere stories, they are certainly neither so varied nor so *piquant* as their predecessors, which arises entirely from the character of the scenes from which the author has drawn her illustrations. Instead of smiling villages, or the rural or grander scenery to which we had been accustomed, we are now brought into the crowded haunts of men, we are in the midst of populous cities, and compassed about with the din and clamour of unceasing industry. But we are consoled for these deficiencies, and for the less attractive character of the pictorial part of these tales, by the terseness of much of the dialogue, and the vigour and variety of the discussions, not less than by the happy illustrations which are thus produced, of some of the most important doctrines of political economy. The characters of Allen and Clack, the leaders of the operatives, and of some of the master manufacturers, are drawn with great force and spirit, whilst the rude excitement and bustle of the "strike" are described with equal ability. In this admirable tale, we have a ray of light thrown upon one of the profoundest sections of society, in the most densely peopled of our districts; the principles which move, control, and regulate the most various parts of its machinery, are laid before us with a subtlety and power of analysis, and a clearness and force of description, seldom excelled. And we would consider it as a great boon to the working classes, if the principal part of this tale of "A Manchester Strike," were reprinted in a cheaper form, and circulated widely amongst them; it could not fail to be of great and extensive use.

No. 8, is entitled "Cousin Marshall," and contains a touching memorial, drawn from "the short and simple annals of the poor," of their virtues and their vices, of the sins which most easily beset them, and the nobility of mind to which they may attain, even when surrounded by vulgar temptations, and heart-struck with the cheerless prospect of immitigable poverty. The glaring

evils of the English system of poor-rates were never depicted with such a graphic truth of pencil before, and never was the distinction betwixt an ignorant and an enlightened benevolence, so forcibly illustrated. The moral degradation of the recipient of cold and legal charity, is drawn with great force, and a gloomy picture laid before us of this ever-enlarging gulf of pauperism, which threatens to swallow up the property of the rich and the prospects of the poor. This is a valuable present to society, if society will but make use of it. The pest of pauperism or indigence is creeping upon us apace, and but that we see cause for hope in the moral aspect of the times, and in the resurrection of the liberties of our countrymen, we should surely despair. But we rejoice that the bow of hope is on the horizon, and have infinite faith in the regenerated spirit and virtue of the people and their rulers, that they will not fail to apply the knife unflinchingly to the most tender and peccant parts of our social institutions. Thanks to Miss Martineau and others, the seed has been sown in abundance; may the harvest be as plenteous. Before concluding, we cannot avoid noticing the exquisite sketch of "Cousin Marshall;" a more touching picture of virtuous poverty and noble independence, rising above the hardships and temptations of its situation, we have never met with; it is equal to the best of Crabbe's descriptions. The heart which conceived it, and the pencil which sketched it, are alike to be envied; and we pity the individual, who can rise from its contemplation and not feel himself wiser and better.

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, OCTOBER 1, 1832.

THE American Unitarian Association, held its Seventh Anniversary at Boston, on Tuesday, May 29; and in consequence of the interest of the meeting, by adjournment to Thursday, June 1. Rev. Dr. Bancroft, the venerable president, was in the chair. Rev. Dr. Harris of Dorchester commenced the meeting with prayer, and the Reports of the Domestic and Foreign Secretary having been read, the meeting was addressed by the president, Judge Rogers of Boston, Rev. Mr. Begelow of Medford, G. B. Emerson, Esq. of Boston, Rev. Mr. Lathrop of Dover, N. H. Rev. Mr. Sewall of Danvers, Judge Story of Cambridge, Revs. E. S. Gannett and Ripley of Boston, Farley of Providence, May of Brooklyn, Connecticut, Sullivan of Keene, Alden Bradford, Esq. of New Bedford, Rev. Mr. Muzzey of Framingham, Brooks of Hingham, and Farr of Gardner; and the President concluded with prayer. We hope soon to receive the Committee's Report, from which we shall give extracts. The more ample account of the Association, which we have usually received, has not yet reached us by the accustomed channel.

ON Friday, June 15, an Annual Meeting of the Friends of

Unitarianism, was held at the village of Astley, a Missionary station in Lancashire. The meeting was composed of upwards of 100 persons, principally inhabitants of the village, with a few friends from Manchester, Chowbent, Swinton, and other places, and displayed the utmost harmony and good will. The Chairman, the Rev. J. R. Beard of Manchester, introduced a number of resolutions, praying for an extension of brotherly affection among men, of civil and religious liberty, of liberality of sentiment, of the influence of Unitarianism, and of a spirit of reformation in the Established Church, and was supported by the individuals who spoke on their respective resolutions, and the unanimous approbation of the meeting. At the close of the meeting, sixty-four persons took tea in the Meeting-house. In this number is included about fifteen persons, wives or daughters of the teachers in the Sunday-schools, who had been invited to partake gratuitously, and to assist in the general preparation. The small charge of sixpence each on the others, defrayed the whole expense. After tea, it was suggested, that, as the teachers and members of the congregation had now enjoyed an intellectual treat, something should be done to enable the scholars to partake in the general satisfaction. Contributions amounting to sixteen shillings, were immediately made to forward this object, and it was determined that it should take place in the following week. To this sum six shillings and eightpence was afterwards added by the members of the congregation not present at the time. In consequence, the scholars assembled at the Meeting-house, on the Friday following, to the number of one hundred and thirty. They proceeded with some of the teachers through the village, and returned to the Meeting-house, where they were regaled with currant-bread and tea. The whole expense on this occasion amounted to twenty-five shillings, which, among 130 children, is little more than twopence farthing each; and at this small expense were these children rendered cheerful, happy, and contented. Whilst the procession marched along, many persons, Methodists and others unacquainted with our proceedings, expressed themselves perfectly astonished to see so many children connected with the poor Unitarian Congregation of Astley. They thought, because we had always held on the even tenor of our way without display or parade, that we had met week after week with a few scholars merely, the children of those who taught in the school; whereas we had a stronger muster than any other school in the neighbourhood. It is to be hoped, that the removal of this error will tend to increase our resources, in providing for the education of these children. Many of the active members have their spirits much raised by these proceedings, and the prosperous state of the Society in general. So much is this the case, that when the propriety of furnishing backs to the forms, for the greater accommodation of the congregation, was suggested, it was strongly objected to by some who were not for expending one farthing more than was necessary, but for husbanding all their resources, in order that they may hereafter procure a more convenient place of meeting, which by some means they may be enabled to call their own. Though this is generally

considered a thing more to be desired than hoped for, yet the feeling deserves to be encouraged, as for little more than £100 they could effect all they desire, and the interest of this would not be more than the rent paid for their present building.

The Annual Meeting was addressed by Rev. J. Ragland, Hindley, Mr. J. Ramsdale, Wigan, Mr. W. Boardman, Swinton, Messrs. F. Duffield, A. Hardy, and G. M. Ainsworth, Manchester; Mr. Thomas Peake, Chowbent, and Messrs. J. Wood and Makinson, two of the members of the congregation at Astley. F. D.

ON Sunday, July 15, the Rev. J. G. Robberds of Manchester, preached two excellent and impressive discourses, to crowded congregations at Ashford, Derbyshire, who listened with the utmost attention and delight, to his masterly exposition of Unitarian sentiments, and their practical tendency. Every countenance seemed lighted with intelligence and joy. When the preacher came to speak of the district in which he then was, and the pleasure he experienced in witnessing the fervour and animation displayed, he was overpowered by his feelings; and the meeting appeared deeply to sympathize with him.

Had there been present any who esteem Unitarianism cold, insipid, lifeless, or incapable of rousing the affections of the poor, he would have witnessed a practical refutation of his opinions, when he beheld all hearts led captive by the persuasive eloquence of truth.

On Sunday evening, Mr. F. Duffield of Manchester, preached a sermon at Flagg, on the connexion between faith and works, which was attentively listened to.

On Monday morning, Mr. Duffield preached in the chapel at Ashford; in the afternoon, a public meeting was held, the Rev. J. G. Robberds in the chair; and in the evening, the Rev. T. May of Stand, also preached a sermon.

On the Sunday, the attendances were astonishingly numerous. On the Monday, they were more slender, as the parties had their several avocations to attend to, and as the day proved remarkably fine for hay-making. The numbers were on Sunday afternoon, 200. In the evening they were estimated as not much short of 300; they may be fairly put down at 250. At Flagg, from 60 to 70. On the Monday, there were present in the morning 22, afternoon 50, evening 65. When it is remembered that Ashford contains only 700 inhabitants, it is indeed astonishing and highly gratifying, that congregations so numerous, and taking so lively an interest in the proceedings, should assemble together.

Among other resolutions passed at the meeting, it was proposed by Mr. J. Ellis, and seconded by Mr. J. Blair, two of the members of the congregation at Ashford, "That this meeting tenders its best thanks to Mr. Shenton, for his valuable exertions in the cause of truth." At the suggestion of the chairman, the meeting departed from the usual method of showing hands, and indicated its approval of the resolution by standing up.

It was also unanimously resolved, "That the thanks of this

meeting be given to the Rev. R. Naylor, for the use of his chapel, and for his presence on this occasion."

The meeting was addressed by the Revs. E. R. Dimock of Warrington, and T. May of Stand, and Messrs. R. Shenton and J. Ellis, Ashford, and F. Duffield, Manchester.

The whole proceedings appeared to give general satisfaction to the people, to cheer and invigorate them in the pursuit of truth and righteousness, and, as is hoped, to produce effects which may be found many days hence.

At Flagg, a practical proof of the eagerness of the people to learn more of our sentiments was given. One of Mr. Shenton's hearers requested the loan of some tracts, which he would take to the houses of his neighbours. Mr. Shenton let him have what he thought was a good stock. On Saturday evening after the service, the man stated that his supply was quite inadequate, for that if he passed by any of the doors, without leaving a tract, the inmates felt half-offended at him. F. D.

Warwickshire Unitarian Tract Society.—THE Twenty-sixth Annual General Meeting of the Unitarian Tract Society, established in Birmingham, for Warwickshire and the neighbouring counties, was held at Wolverhampton, on Tuesday, July 31, 1832. The Rev. Samuel Bache of Birmingham, conducted the devotional service; and the Rev. Richard Astley of Shrewsbury, delivered a very able and judicious discourse from Romans x. 9. At the close of the service, the business of the Society was transacted, when several new names were added to the list of subscribers. Between thirty and forty gentlemen afterwards dined together; Joseph Pearson, Esq. in the chair. The meeting was attended by the Rev. Messrs. Astley, Bache, Davis, H. Hutton, S. Hunter, E. Jones, R. Kell Kentish, Lloyd, and J. R. Wreford, who, with other gentlemen, spoke upon many topics of common interest connected with the objects of the Society. More than ordinary pleasure was felt on the present occasion, from the improved circumstances of the Wolverhampton congregation, since the Society last held its annual meeting in this town. It will be remembered that they were unjustly deprived of their chapel; but during many years of persecution and privation, when they were unable to obtain the service of a resident and permanent minister, some individuals of their number conducted a religious service regularly in a room hired for the purpose; thus showing a most praiseworthy example to other societies which may be similarly situated. The congregation have recently erected a neat and commodious chapel, and have been fortunate in finding in the Rev. Stephenson Hunter, an active and able advocate of their cause, who has now for some time been their stated pastor. J. R. WREFORD, Secretary.

Thanksgiving 'Sermons on the passing of the Reform Bills.—By an advertisement which appeared on the cover of this Magazine for September, our readers would see that the Editor had published a sermon on the all-engrossing topic of Parliamentary Reform. It was preached on the 5th August. So great was

the interest excited, that long before the time of service, the Chapel was crowded in every part. It was computed, that thirteen hundred people must have been in the Chapel and its vestries. At the earnest request of numbers who could not even approach the door, Mr. Harris consented to repeat the discourse in the evening. It was published in consequence of urgent applications of the hearers.

On 12th August the Rev. W. Smith delivered a Sermon on the same subject, to a very crowded audience at Dundee. So great was the interest it called forth, that he was requested to re-deliver it on a week evening, and a more commodious place was engaged for the purpose. From the Dundee Newspaper we quote the following particulars:—

“At the request of a number of individuals who were present in the Unitarian Chapel on Sabbath se’nnight, the Rev. Mr. Smith repeated, on the evening of Wednesday last week, in the Caledonian Hall, a discourse which he had delivered in his own chapel. The text was to the point—being part of Mark xii. 12—‘But feared the people;’ and the illustration was managed with much temper and ability, and afforded the highest gratification to a crowded audience. Mr. Smith stated that the discourse had been prepared solely for the benefit of his own congregation, with the view of improving the season of rejoicing which had been set apart by the people, to celebrate the triumph of human improvement over corruption and venality. He repelled the objection that such topics were unsuitable to the pulpit; and observed, that, in seasons of calamity, no objection was made to religious improvement being derived; and was it fair, that seasons of rejoicing, like the present, should be passed over with indifference? He adverted to the mighty effects of public opinion in all ages; and illustrated from the gospel and history, the exertion of it for ill as well as for good purposes. He continued the view downward to the present time; and exhibited the tests by which the ‘right or wrong’ of public opinion was to be ascertained. After pointing out the duties which devolved upon those who had a voice in the election of future representatives,—exhorting them to select men of TRIED principles, and such as were friendly to Church Reform, the removal of all taxes upon knowledge, and the abolition of all monopolies,—Mr. Smith concluded a highly interesting discourse, with the following impressive words: ‘I will not part with you, my friends, without one farewell admonition. While righteously employed in reforming your civil polity, let not your hearts remain corrupt and your actions unregenerate. If every individual were to perfect that moral reform of his heart and life, which reason and religion alike prescribe as the great work of the man and of the Christian, how easy would be the regeneration of our country; and how vain will be all our exertions for its salvation, if our own is periled by crime or carelessness! Let us remember, that in the pursuit of virtue, we shall find happiness; in the reform of morals, the improvement of the heart, the cultivation of holy and religious affections, we shall lay the sure foundations of our country’s peace, prosperity, and honour.’”

OUR readers will have learned from the account of the proceedings of the Scottish Unitarian Christian Association, that the Rev. W. Smith had resigned the charge of the congregation at Dundee. Amidst our regret at his departure, and our hope for his future usefulness and happiness, we have much pleasure in recording the following facts, honourable alike to himself and the Unitarians of Dundee. In the afternoon of Sunday, August 26, Mr. Smith delivered a farewell sermon, from the words "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering." The chapel was quite full. At the close of the service, and after the strangers who were present had retired, Mr. Smith addressed the members of the congregation, thanking them for the kind and respectful manner in which he had been uniformly treated by them, and expressing the hope that some good had been effected by their united exertions in the removal of prejudice and error. Mr. George Speid, on the part of the congregation, came forward and expressed in the most feeling and impressive manner, the regret of the Society at the loss they were about to sustain by Mr. Smith's removal—their unfeigned respect for his talents and character—and their admiration of his strenuous labours in the advancement of Christian righteousness and truth. Mr. Speid then presented to Mr. Smith a handsome volume, which had been purchased by their united subscriptions, and on which was inscribed these words:—

"Presented to the Rev. William Smith, by the undersigned members of the Dundee Unitarian Congregation, in testimony of their respect for him as a man—their approval of the manner in which, for two years, he has discharged the duties of a Unitarian minister among them—their regret that circumstances render it necessary that their mutual connection should be dissolved, and their earnest wishes for his prosperity and happiness." Mr. Smith replied, the audience were deeply affected, and with mutual good wishes and fervent prayers, Mr. Smith and his friends separated.

IN our last volume, we recorded the resignation of the Rev. James Martineau of Eustace-street, Dublin, in consequence of his rejection of the Regium Donum, and inserted his admirable letter, explanatory of the motives and principles which led to that rejection. We now gladly print the following correspondence on the termination of Mr. Martineau's ministry in that city.

"Rev. and dear Sir,—It being the wish of some of your friends here (whose names are annexed) to give some expression to the sense which they entertain of your talents, zeal, and private worth, we are deputed to convey to you the assurance of their sincere regard.

"It is apparent that a difference of opinion exists upon the circumstances which led to your resignation. We shall therefore confine ourselves to a subject, with respect to which there is no diversity of opinion. Some of your friends think with you, that the Royal Bounty acts as an impediment to true religion, whilst others conscientiously consider it an indispensable support. But we all cordially unite in unfeigned respect, for the lofty integrity manifested by its rejection. Here, as in every other part of your

life and conversation, while among us, we recognise an honest man, and differing as we do about other matters, we all know how to appreciate this 'noblest work of God.'

"Nor can we, keeping in view the right of private judgment on all points, refrain from expressing our high admiration of the ministry of one, who so fully and fearlessly declared what in his conscience he believed to be the whole counsel of God, and who has never been disposed to assume any authority over the opinions of his people, but on the contrary, has been most anxious that they should think for themselves.

In entreating your acceptance of the accompanying tribute of sincere regard, we rejoice at the opportunity thus afforded of expressing our sentiments. You have now entered on the discharge of other pastoral duties: that these may be a source of happiness to yourself, and advantageous to your people, is our earnest hope; and we entreat you to be assured, that your character, public and private, has deeply interested numbers in your welfare, and that you leave behind you many warm friends."—Signed by 82 individuals.

Dublin, July 14, 1832.

"Dear and generous Friends,—The munificent expression of regard, which you have conveyed to me in the name of many from whom I have grieved to dis sever myself, has touched and humbled, while it has encouraged me. It has touched me, by adding an overpowering claim on a gratitude already due, and already felt towards those among whom the first years of my active life have been happily passed. It has humbled me, by reminding me how much more I should have done to merit an approbation, so generously disproportionate to the value of my ministry and character. And it has encouraged me, by assuring me, that acts of simple duty are never without their sympathy, and that these are times in which, to the earnest lover of truth and righteousness, faith in man is a feeling scarcely less appropriate than trust in God.

"The principle involved in the act which led to my resignation, I am content to leave to the decision of that enlightened public opinion, which will be the natural result of candid and frequent discussion. It is enough for me to hope, that to that discussion, the events in which I have borne a share, may give some impulse; and that with my present convictions, any course but that which I have pursued, would have exposed me to the just reprobation of upright men, and the scorn of my own mind. I beg you to assure the friends in whose names you have acted, that through whatever future scenes Providence may conduct me, I shall retain a grateful remembrance of their wholly unmerited generosity and feebly-merited regard, and desire their best welfare, with an earnestness undiminished by separation.

"Believe me ever, your grateful and faithful

JAMES MARTINEAU."

THE
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Orthodoxy giving way to Scriptural Truth.

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR,—Persons whose eyes are opened to discern the true import of the Scriptures, and the full extent of those errors by which the influence of our Saviour's divine lessons is impaired, are often disposed to mourn over the slow progress of religious information. And yet the reforming hand of time, though seemingly at rest, is in reality advancing *steadily*, if not rapidly. Naked orthodoxy clothed in its appropriate language, in that language which a sincere believer in its mysteries must necessarily adopt, is not relished except by a small party in these times. A plain undisguised statement of what many people conscientiously believe of the sufferings and *death* of the Almighty giver of *life*, would shock any audience which has the least pretension to education and cultivation. That Almighty God became a little child; that he who fills all space with his presence was laid in a manger, and that he "grew and was strengthened in spirit;" that he who is acquainted with the end from the beginning, was at the same time ignorant of the day and the hour of the final consummation of all things; and that he actually suffered death at the hands of some of his feeble creatures, whose life he nevertheless continued to uphold;—these and many such things may be denominated *mysteries*, but they are so plainly and palpably of the nature of absurdities, impossibilities, and contradictions, that although the advocate of orthodoxy cannot disclaim them, he does not find it convenient to brave the ridicule and disgust which would be the infallible result of the broad and undisguised and frequent assertion of them. He therefore exhibits his system in the form of casual allusions to the more indefensible parts of it, and more detailed discussions of those which are more in unison with the common sense of mankind, or at least which admit of being so stated as to appear less revolting to reason.

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It is very true, that a preacher whose mind is deeply penetrated with the truth of these delusions, will not pursue this course. With him the difficulty of belief enhances its merit and its imagined efficacy, and he therefore delights to bring prominently forward, those incredible things which the more judicious and less enthusiastic, and, perhaps I may add, *less honest* part of his own party, are disposed to keep either wholly or partially out of view. Such a man must have an auditory composed of persons like himself; for, if he address any other, he will either drive them away, or preach them into a doubt of those principles which they have hitherto received without reflection, and therefore without distrust or hesitation.

These remarks would be easily justified by an appeal to the writings of ancient and modern divines. The sermons of the former are frequently much too *plainly* orthodox to suit an audience in modern times; and the fact is a proof, that notwithstanding the efforts which have been made to render theology stationary, and to make the opinions of the Westminster Divines the standard of correctness for their successors, this most important of sciences has in reality profited greatly by the increasing information of mankind, and is destined in future to advance with accelerated pace. Let any one read the Confession of Faith and Catechism of the Scottish Church, and compare the fulness and breadth of orthodoxy, with which these ancient standards of opinion abound, with the meagreness and subdued expression of it in the sermons of any divine who addresses an educated and cultivated audience, and then let him say whether orthodoxy has not "fallen from its high estate."

In truth, there is nothing so much to be desired by those who wish for the utter extinction of Calvinism, as that the ancient honest practice of preaching it unequivocally, and dwelling incessantly on all its repulsive absurdities, its intolerance, and exclusiveness, should be revived by all its professed advocates. But even those preachers who honestly believe it, or persuade themselves that they believe it, are for the most part convinced that this undisguised exhibition of what they deem its essential doctrines, is not the way to perpetuate its falling influence over the present perverse generation. Such, at least, is the conclusion which their actual practice forces us to draw. They do not now sing as they used to do, of the infant

"born to be suckled and adored;" and it must be distressing to the judicious advocate of established error, to witness the inconsiderate manner in which those mysteries, which are so little fitted to be subjected to the scrutinizing eye of the modern inquirer, are occasionally dragged into day by honest enthusiasm, instead of being kept in the inner recesses of the temple, into which none but the priest may enter.

A writer who possesses more information and intelligence than most of the divines of this enthusiastic class,* when treating of the mummeries practised by the priests at Bethlehem, quotes from a late traveller the following passage:—"I have heard an organ, touched by no ordinary hand, playing during mass the sweetest and most tender tunes of the best Italian composers. These concerts charm the Christian Arab, who, leaving his camels to feed, repairs, like the shepherds of old, to Bethlehem, to adore the *King of kings in his manger*."

But *divines* generally calculate better the effects of their expressions, and leave it to the laity to bring forward those staggering statements of the common belief. A modern traveller who has enjoyed a more than common share of popularity, and who appears to take the prevalent theology as he finds it, without troubling his head much about the matter, employs the following language in his account of his visit to the church of the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem:—"As the last and most important monument within these walls, and that to which every other is made subservient, we entered the holy sepulchre itself, the venerated *tomb of the Living God*; an excavation originally made by human hands, though destined to contain, for a given period, the lifeless corpse of the great Creator and Director of the Universe"!

In a subsequent part of the same work, the author, commenting on Dr. Clarke's scepticism as to the genuineness of this sepulchre, says, "but surely it is not calling this tomb of the Living God, 'a dusty fabric standing like a huge pepper-box in the midst of the church,' that can disprove its having contained the lifeless corpse of the Great Creator of the Universe."†

What became of the Universe when the lifeless corpse

* Russell on Palestine.

† See Buckingham's Travels in Palestine, pages 250 and 286.

of its great Creator and Director was contained in the sepulchre at Jerusalem? Such expressions freeze our blood; but when we recover from this first impression, they force us to reflect on the tendency of the opinions which are professed by the million, and they are therefore not without utility. A believer in the common system cannot deny the appropriateness of the expressions, however much these may shock the understanding of mankind; and those who think them absurd and almost profane, will do well to consider, that the absurdity and profanity belong, not to the words merely, but to that doctrine of which the words contain merely the naked and undisguised expression. It may be well also to consider, whether the Popish designation, "Mother of God," applied to the Virgin Mary, and objected to, I believe, by all Protestants, can be consistently condemned by the abettors of any system of theology which maintains, that Jesus Christ is God. Like the expressions already quoted, it seems to me to be objectionable, only as exhibiting too plainly the-absurdity and contradiction necessarily involved in this doctrine of Popery and of Calvinism.

Lord Bacon remarks, that there are in religion "two false unities," one "grounded but upon an implicit ignorance, for all colours will agree in the dark: the other, when it is pieced up upon a direct admission of contraries in fundamental points; for truth and falsehood, in such things, are like the iron and clay in the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image; they may cleave, but they will not incorporate."

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,
PHILALETHES.

On the Moral Constitution and History of Man.

CHAPTER XI.

IT will be familiar to most of my readers, that there is a certain class of professing Christians, who are constantly speaking about *the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel*, and who by alleging these to be the same which are peculiar to their own sect, do in virtue of this supposed coincidence, assume rather a high tone. We are about to prove, that its Morality is by far the most *peculiar* and important doctrine of Christianity.

I am aware that this assertion will be received by such people with special prejudice; but they ought to observe, that the thing in favour of which we are about to argue, is not that meagre system of moral precepts, which rests upon mere arbitrary authority, or on the principles of common Justice; such as the Ten Commandments of Moses, and other similar compends. It is a Morality resting upon the principles of Benevolence, as regards man and as regards God, upon our knowledge of his true character, and our confidence in his truth. It is in this point of view, we contend, that the moral sentiments and precepts of Christianity form its very substance and peculiarity.

The purpose of our present argument, however, requires that we confine our discussion chiefly to that branch of the Christian Morality, which regards the transactions of men with each other in their social relations; and what we have to prove, is this:—1st, That this subject forms a prominent and essential part of Christianity. 2d, That the Christian system of Social Morality is founded expressly on the principle of Benevolence, in contrast to that of Justice and of Authority.

In attempting this proof, I think I am entitled to assume, that whatever our Lord esteemed most essential and peculiar in that doctrine which he was commissioned to teach, will be found in his own personal discourses. We are too much in the habit of regarding the Bible as one entire homogeneous book, every part of which may be quoted as of equal authority upon every point. But the doctrine of the Old Testament was avowedly adapted to an inferior and dark dispensation; while the Epistles of the Apostles consist chiefly of special arguments upon Jewish questions and customs, which happened for special reasons to engage the attention of the Christians of *that generation*. The subject of such books therefore, however interesting in itself, is really a different thing from that *New Light* which the Messiah came to reveal, and which was not designed for one age, or for one class of mankind; but for the whole, and to the end of time. Hence he says, “I am the Light of the world; whosoever followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” Now, if we listen to *him*, we shall perceive that *his leading doctrine* was his *Morality*—unsophisticated, unmodified, and peremptory in its demands.

Let us open the Gospels, which are the *only records* of

his "sayings." In the book of Matthew, which was the first written, the general narrative is introduced by a formal summary of the Christian doctrine, in what is usually called our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. The place assigned to this discourse in the first authentic record—the length and connexion of its parts—the remarkable words by which it is closed, declaring solemnly that whosoever received and *did* those specific sayings of his, should be safe and happy against all perils; and whosoever neglected them, should perish; all these circumstances clearly show, that this discourse was intended to exhibit whatever was most peculiar, essential, and imperative in his doctrine. Indeed (with the exception of miracles to substantiate his authority) almost the whole remainder of this Gospel, as well as those of Mark and Luke, consists of parables illustrating his moral precepts, and of incidents by which their repetition was occasionally called forth. This is particularly descriptive of Luke's Gospel, in which we find different parts of this discourse in Matthew, repeated at intervals, and as having been delivered upon different occasions, or under circumstances which give additional force and illustration to particular precepts. From these facts, we may reasonably infer, that our Lord was in the habit of repeating the same sayings on various occasions, and that they constituted what he frequently and emphatically termed *his "Words,"* or "*the Word of God.*"

It is true, that in John's Gospel, we have almost none of our Saviour's moral discourses or sayings; but the time and circumstances under which *it* was written, only tend to fortify our general observation. The Gospel of John consists of discourses and incidents wholly explanatory of his Master's personal character, in reference to his connexion with God. On that topic the other Evangelists had recorded but little, and that only incidentally. It was not a subject which had occupied much of the attention of the earliest Christians, and the reason is obvious. Men required to be first convinced of the *authority* of Christ—to have a just idea of his kingdom and its laws—and to be willing to be his disciples or subjects, before they could feel any rational interest in, or have any just conception of, his peculiar character in relation to God. For this reason, John's Gospel was not written for about fifty years at least, after the personal ministry of his Master; and consequently, the whole first generation of Christians

—the best by universal consent, that the world has since seen—knew nothing of their religion but what was written by Matthew, Mark, and Luke,* or repeated verbally by the numerous persons who had heard our Lord's personal discourses. This indeed constituted that Tradition of the Church, which was not only antecedent to the writing of the Gospels, but which was esteemed superior to them, for the writings of the Evangelists are only a history of that Tradition.

Our view respecting the pre-eminent importance of its Morality in the Christian system, is confirmed by this remarkable circumstance, that the most frequent and favourite view which is given of the Christian dispensation in the Gospels, is that of a *kingdom*. In all other systems of religion, and indeed in the popular idea of any religion generally, the chief things to be regarded are—certain dogmas of faith respecting the Divine Being, or other gods who may be adored—certain forms of worship due to him or to them—the hopes of special benefits to be received in consequence of such worship—or the fears of punishment for the neglect, whether in the present, or in a future state. All these points, for instance, are involved in the Jewish religion—they are contained in the Mahometan, and in every other system of *faith* or *religion*. But it was peculiar to Christianity to propose a set of moral principles and precepts, by which *society* should be governed, and a kingdom established “on earth,” diverse from all the kingdoms or governments which had been, or ever should be, in the world; and under which, mankind universally should acquire a degree of improvement and happiness, unattainable by any other means or to any similar extent.

This is the view which the Prophets gave of the *reign* of Messiah. It was in this view, that the doctrine of Christ was announced as the “commencement of the kingdom of heaven;” and in this sense, we are taught to pray to God, “thy kingdom come, thy will be done *on earth* as it is done in heaven.” The moral doctrine of Christ, containing the principles and the laws by which this kingdom was to be constituted and governed, is therefore the most dis-

* It is not meant, that the matter of John's record, is less authentic than that of the other Evangelists; but only that it differs in point of *order* and *primary* importance. We shall advert to this again in a future Chapter.

tinctive and characteristic portion of Christianity. It has for its object a definite effect, to be produced on *society* and in *this life*.

To be sure, its individual disciples will be governed by its laws in their private conduct also, and the reward of such conduct will follow them to a future state; but that consideration is not, or ought not, to be their principal aim. We do not say, that the prospects of a future reward, are not held out in the Gospels as motives of action and of consolation; but there are other motives. A desire for the glory of God in the world—for his present approbation in our own minds—for the happiness of mankind—for our personal improvement and moral dignity; all these motives should have a direct and preponderating influence on the disciples of Christianity. And the advantage of this is, that it prevents that engrossing interest about the concerns of a *future state*, which frequently makes people forget or overlook the duties and the business of the present. We do not speak of the business of the world, and of the men of the world,—that has abundant motives of its *own sort*, to prompt to exertion; we speak of the business in which our Lord himself was employed, and of which he set us an example—namely, “to do the will of our Father who is in heaven.” And what *that will* is, Christ hath taught us in the “sayings, words,” or precepts of his discourse on the Mount.

The maxim of Christianity is, “make the tree good and the fruit shall be good”—regenerate the man in *this life*—raise him up from the low and grovelling principles of this infant state of being, to the sublime principles of the kingdom of heaven, and we need have no apprehension of his future well-being.

A third argument in favour of the supreme importance of its Morality in the Christian system, is derived from the manner in which our Lord prefaces and explains his details of it. On that occasion he is very explicit in marking the distinction between *his* present doctrine, and that of former ages. In *old time*, the moral obligations of men were confined to the rules of Justice. Every man was expected to do complete justice to his neighbour, and entitled to demand strict justice in return: “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.” But by the doctrine of Christ, the principle of Morality is Benevolence, and its disciples are commanded to do *more* than justice to others, and to be content with *less* than justice to themselves. Our Lord fre-

quently and formally marks this distinction in substance, though not in words, and we cannot comprehend the design and character of his Sermon on the Mount, without regarding it as an exposition of the doctrine of Benevolence, contrasted with that of Justice.

This contrast is particularly marked from the 20th verse to the end of the fifth chapter of Matthew (which may be read at leisure under this view), and the same idea pervades the whole discourse, even where it is not so distinctly expressed. For instance, the beatitudes are evidently selected to mark the contrast between the maxims and principles which usually prevail in the world, and those which should prevail in the kingdom of heaven. Contentment, meekness, mercy, peace, and a zeal for truth and righteousness, are all so many manifestations of the spirit of Benevolence, ever ready to be satisfied with *less* than justice to itself, and to give or to do *more* to others. Such virtues are opposed to ambition, to resentment, to strict claims of right, to wars, and to a selfish indifference about whatever concerns not our own advantage. All these worldly principles are generally covered, indeed, or attempted to be covered by a cloak and a show of Justice; for none but the most depraved and vicious of mankind, can barefacedly avow even to themselves, that they are actuated by motives of injustice.

No, forsooth; but they think or say, "that they may do with their own what they please"—they may follow the bent of their own tastes and inclinations—they may gratify their passions, claim their rights, pursue their individual interests; all to the utmost verge of what public law or decency will allow. You cannot tax them with *injustice*, as they suppose; and that is all they care for. But they are mistaken, even in that supposition; because even within the limits which they have assigned themselves, people will have very different ideas of what is just and unjust, in their dealings with, and treatment of each other. Hence abundant room is left for envy, hatred, contention, and even violence, all done under colour of laws and customs, civil, military, or conventional. In all such respects, Justice (as we formerly said) is a defective rule for the conduct of such beings as men, and placed in such circumstances as they are. But the precepts and maxims of Benevolence, are a cure for all such evils.

The same character belongs to the other precepts and

maxims, which occur singly in various parts of our Lord's discourse. For instance, the precept of forgiveness, on which such emphatic stress is laid, that the forgiveness of God towards ourselves is suspended upon it. That precept clearly belongs to the class of Benevolence, and not of Justice. In the same manner, "Judge not, that ye be not judged;" and finally, that comprehensive one, "whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." This rule of placing ourselves in the position of our neighbours, is, in other words, to take a *generous* view of all subjects on which a difference of interest or feeling may arise—to dispel the illusions of *self-love* and prejudice—and to draw us out of the circle of our own personal *rights*, that we may candidly contemplate those of others; in short, it is to be governed by benevolence, and not by selfishness.

This, we still find, is the *end* of all our Saviour's doctrine—whether we regard his precepts singly, or in combination—whether we attend to the parables by which it is illustrated—to the motives by which it is enforced—or to his own example, and the character of our heavenly Father, by which it is recommended.

But it is not only by such positive evidence, that we discover the peculiar characteristics of the Christian Morality. It is also manifested by the omission of many rules of Justice and Prudence, which no other moralist would have overlooked in any systematic arrangement. Our Lord seems to have omitted such things *on purpose*, that the peculiarity of his doctrine might appear more striking, and that the attention of his hearers might be fixed upon the *new light* which he was revealing to the world. The rules of justice and prudence had been sufficiently taught and enforced by Moses, and by other legislators and moralists. And so far, he declared that he came not "to destroy the law and the prophets," but rather to build up and extend their doctrine; *because* he that is willing to do *more* than justice, must be so much the more willing to do *what is just*.

We have heard indeed complaints, that certain people are generous before they are just. But actions of this kind are sometimes caused by the force of circumstances, which, if sufficiently known, might excuse if not justify the deeds in question; or more frequently, people who act in this way, are influenced by a constitutional *instinct* of tender-

ness, rather than by a *principle* of benevolence. They are thoughtless, and do not reflect, that as every man's means of active beneficence are limited, he ought to make a proper selection of cases, and to exert himself in the first instance and preferably, in favour of those who have claims of justice and relationship over him. If he act thus, his benevolence will not interfere with his justice; and the man whose mind is regulated by a steady *principle*, will do so.

This distinction between the instinct and the principle of benevolence, may be remarked in other instances of conduct besides this. There are persons who "will give to him that asketh," where it happens to please their fancy, or to affect their feelings, and provided always, that the boon be asked with all due humility; but the same persons will contend most obstinately for every point of right—they will yield nothing of their supposed privileges—they will suffer no wrong—they will forgive no injury. Now it is plain, that such persons do not understand the doctrine of benevolence. They are not governed by it, but by their caprice and their casual impressions. But after all, these instincts, however defective they may be, are still good things, and only want regulation. It may be affirmed generally of people who have such benevolent instincts, that they will not commit acts of deliberate injustice, such as over-reaching or defrauding their neighbours, and telling lies to accomplish their ends, *because* they are void of that selfishness of purpose, and that *excessive love* of money which prompt to such conduct.

Upon the whole, therefore, it still remains, that benevolence includes justice, and most distinctly and positively so, when it is regulated by reason and by principle—by a due regard to ultimate consequences, rather than to transient circumstances and emotions.

This view of the matter, we say, accounts for and justifies the apparent omission or neglect by our Saviour, of several moral precepts which otherwise required to be impressed on the minds of the people, and some of which are accordingly so urged by the Apostles, in their practical exhortations to the churches under their care. It was proper in *them*, and it is proper in *all ordinary teachers* of religion, to inculcate various precepts of justice and prudence, especially those which, from the spirit of the age, the people may be most apt to overlook and to neglect. But the mission of Christ, as a moral Teacher, was to

lead mankind to higher principles; and it was requisite that he should so express himself, that there should be no ground for misunderstanding him, or for overlooking what he meant to be of paramount importance, by viewing it in a crowd of other things, which might be more to our taste.

In contrast with this method, we may remark, that some of the precepts of Christ, have indeed been expressed in substance by ancient philosophers; but then it was only incidentally, and often in company with the merest and most insignificant truisms; and at other times neutralised or obscured by opinions and maxims of an opposite character. In all such cases, there is a disposition in mankind to satisfy their conscience by an ostentatious attention to the easier rules, which they think will excuse them from the more difficult. But one characteristic of our Lord's manner is, that he was absolutely uncompromising; yet he does not conceal that there are difficulties, only he will not allow us to dispose of them in our own way—a way which has, in fact, caused his precepts to be in a great measure obscured, and even forgotten by professing Christians.

It will be our next business to remove the prejudices and to expose the futility of the excuses which have led to such neglect, and this will give us an opportunity of presenting our subject in some other points of view—of adding to the weight of its evidence, and to the light of its illustration.

Meantime allow me to repeat, that the object of our argument has been to show, that the chief thing in the Christian religion is its Morality. It forms the very substance and end of Christianity. To this all other things are subservient and subordinate; and when we speak of its morality in this manner, we do not use the term in the same sense as when it is said generally, that *practice* is the end of *speculation*, or *works* the evidence of *faith*. That also is true. But we have said, that Christianity has a *peculiar* morality, which distinguishes it from all other systems, in *practice* as well as in *speculation*—that this morality is specially adapted to the constitution of human nature in its mature state of development, but that it has never as yet been appreciated and acted upon in the world, because the world has hitherto been in a state of infancy. The time, however, is now drawing near, when it will be appreciated and practised.

W. B.

Dr. Chalmers' Illustrations of Theology.—No. 4.

BEFORE we proceed to examine another of the illustrations of theology, given by Dr. Chalmers, we ought to pause a moment, and direct our mental eye towards the subject itself which the Doctor professes to illustrate. Theology treats of the nature, attributes, and dispensations of God. And as the Being whose existence, works, and ways come under our investigation in theological research, is of all beings the greatest, wisest, and best; so the subject must be of all subjects the most important, the most serious, and the most sublime. To approach this subject with trifling levity, is therefore most indecent; and to talk and write on it, in the language of sheer bombast and rodomontade, is censurable in the extreme.

But surely it must be the most indecently trifling levity, to represent the great Creator of all worlds, the upholder of all things and beings, "the giver of every good and perfect gift," the Father of mercies and God of love, as interdicting "our approaches to himself," and forbidding us to "say that we have our infirmities, but God is merciful," as Dr. Chalmers has represented him. And most assuredly, if there be such things as bombast and rodomontade to be found in any book whatever, it must be in that which exhibits the eternally unchanging omnipotent and omnipresent Sovereign of the Universe, in the character of a proud, enraged, changeful, but gracefully moving Monarch; who, more anxious far to uphold his dignity and maintain his authority, than to display his goodness, skillfully manages to "subdue his every purpose of revenge" by an "effort of self-denial," and goes from his court and his throne, to the cottage of a rebellious subject, and pardons the rebel, solely to make himself more feared, to gain himself renown, and gratify his own ambition. But this is the character in which God is exhibited in the "Astronomical Discourses" of Dr. Chalmers. The following is a specimen:—

"A king might have the whole of his reign crowded with the enterprises of his glory; and by the might of his arms, and the wisdom of his counsels, might win the first reputation among the potentates of the earth, and be idolized throughout all the provinces, for the wealth and security that he had spread around them; and still it is conceivable, that by the act of a single day, on behalf of

a single family; by some soothing visitation of tenderness to a poor and solitary cottage; by some deed of compassion which conferred enlargement and relief on one despairing sufferer; by some graceful movement of sensibility at a tale of wretchedness; by some noble effort of self-denial, in virtue of which, he subdued his every purpose of revenge, and spread the mantle of a generous oblivion over the fault of the man who had insulted and aggrieved him; above all, by an exercise of pardon so skillfully administered, as that instead of bringing him down to a state of defencelessness against the provocation of future injuries, it threw a deeper sacredness over him, and stamped a more inviolable dignity than ever on his person and character;—it is a most possible thing, that the highest monarch upon earth might draw such a lustre around him, as would eclipse the renown of all his public achievements.”

“In like manner did the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, surrounded as he is with the splendours of a wide and everlasting monarchy, turn him to our humble habitation. Here sin entered. Here was the kind and universal Benefactor repaid by the ingratitude of a whole family. Here the law of God was dishonoured, and that too, in the face of its proclaimed and unalterable sanctions. Here the mighty contest of the attributes was ended; and when justice put forth its demands, and truth called for the fulfilment of its warnings, and the immutability of God would not recede, by a single iota, from any one of its positions; and all the severities he had ever uttered against the children of iniquity, seemed to gather into one cloud of threatening vengeance on the tenement that held us,—did the visit of the only begotten Son chase away all these obstacles to the triumph of mercy; and humble as the tenement may be, yet will the recal of its exiled family never be forgotten, and the illustration that has been given here of the mingled grace and mercy of God, will never lose its place among the themes and acclamations of eternity.”—*Astronomical Discourses*, p. 150, 154.

If this heavy expense of pompous words and swelling figures had been laid out upon any other object than that of illustrating theology, we might, with a smile, just have remarked, it is “much ado about nothing.” But as it is, we must sigh while we censure this extreme prodigality of expenditure to effect worse than nothing. When a man

affirms that "the King eternal turned him to our humble habitation," in like manner as a splendour-hunting, renown-seeking, earthly monarch visits "a poor and solitary cottage;" he is either greatly to be pitied, as labouring under some mental malady which obscures the eye of his understanding, so that it cannot see the gross absurdity of the assertion, or he is severely to be blamed for asserting that which is most glaringly inconsistent with the acknowledged perfections of the Deity, and positively contradictory to the declarations of nature and revelation. God is both unchangeable and omnipresent, and therefore could not "*turn him to our habitation.*" He was here from its creation. He was never for a single moment away from our habitation. "In him we live and move, and have our being." The idea of his turning away from "the splendours of a wide and everlasting monarchy," and by an effort of self-denial, "in virtue of which, he subdued his every purpose of revenge," is most monstrous if not absolutely impious.

But this is not all. After God has thus been compared to a somewhat generous, but still more silly, proud, and pompous king; after he has been represented as *turning* him to our humble dwelling-place, as to a thing beneath his notice, although he made both that and us; and after he is supposed to have "spread the mantle of a generous oblivion over the faults of those who had insulted and agrieved him;" it is in direct opposition declared, that "the immutability of God would not recede, by a single iota, from any one of its positions; and all the severities he had ever uttered against the children of iniquity, seemed to gather into one cloud of threatening vengeance on the tenement that held us." But behold! in the midst of all this, instead of coming himself, as just asserted, it is his only begotten Son who visits our abode, and "chases away all the obstacles to the triumph of mercy."

It is indeed strange, it is marvellously strange, that God should "actually step forward to relieve us from that debt of sin under which we lie," by appointing his Son "an agent of his gratuitous kindness," "whom he asks us to correspond with and draw upon;" and then, instead of leaving us to draw upon this agent, he "*turns him*" to our habitation, and "spreads the mantle of a generous oblivion over our faults;" and when he has done so, and of course "subdued his every purpose of revenge," and un-

dergone as entire a change as it is possible to conceive, he is still immutable, and "will not recede, by a single iota, from any one of his positions;" and he is "gathering into one cloud of threatening vengeance, all the severities he had ever uttered against the children of iniquity," to let it fall with destructive violence upon our feeble tennement; and just then, the Son steps in and removes all the obstacles which stand in the way of mercy!

Now, all this cannot be true. If God has "subdued his every purpose of revenge," and "spread the mantle of a generous oblivion over our faults," then it cannot be true either, that he would not recede, by a single iota, from any one of his positions, or that the Son removed the obstacles which stood in the way of mercy. But if the Son actually did "chase away all the obstacles to the triumph of mercy;" then it is not true either, that the Son was "appointed the agent of God's beneficence," or that God had "turned him to our habitation," "subdued his every purpose of revenge, and spread the mantle of a generous oblivion over our faults."

And is this self-contradiction, this absurdity, this indecent sporting with the proceedings of the Most High God, to be dignified with the name of *divinity*? And is this the divinity, too, that the multitude admire and love almost to madness, and pronounce to be true orthodox evangelical divinity? If so, then the sooner the people are taught to think more soberly, wisely, and Scripturally, the better. Such divinity can only degrade man and dishonour God. And the Doctors of such divinity, by administering to their patients, medicines so totally unfit and powerless to clear the head, invigorate the heart, strengthen the moral constitution, or give the recent invalid renovated and growing energy to discharge the duties of his station, promote the well-being and happiness of his fellow-men, and serve and obey and love his Maker, can only spread more widely that awful pestilence of mad fanaticism and cheerless scepticism, which they profess to be labouring to stay.

H. C.

On Uniformity of Causation.

MR. EDITOR,—In the year 1829, appeared an able work, entitled, "Essays on the Pursuit of Truth, on the progress

of knowledge, and on the fundamental principle of all evidence and expectation; by the Author of *Essays on the Formation and Publication of Opinions*." May I be allowed, after this interval of time, to offer a few remarks on the subject of the third Essay, in which the *Uniformity of Causation* is expounded as the fundamental principle of evidence and expectation? The Essay was designed, according to the author's own account of it, to comprehend the solution of two important questions, viz. the doctrine of philosophical necessity, and the legitimate bounds of testimony. With the former (the dispute concerning which, is shown to be merely verbal), I do not purpose to perplex myself, or to weary your readers; the latter I consider as the most important part of the book, a book which has made a very powerful impression on the minds of thinking Christians, especially in the North of England, the interest of which, has not, I believe, yet grown cold; and the doctrines of which, I am desirous with the author, of seeing thoroughly sifted, assured that until they have been, the effect of the book will be to sanction unbelief in revelation, with the appearance of a new argument which is in fact a sophism.

It is plainly the author's design, in his remarks on the legitimate bounds of testimony, to invalidate the evidence of miracles; though he has not stated this as the design, with the candour which characterises his writings generally. The remarks on testimony, however, must be allowed either to aim at this, or to mean nothing.

I shall, with your permission, endeavour to point out the fallacy of his argument against miracles. He has made one false step, which is fatal to all his reasonings. To point out the flaw in his indictment, will be a sufficient defence of revelation from this attack. The logical error is apt to be overlooked (strange as it may seem to say so), because it is gross and palpable. It shows a bold front, and passes guard unquestioned. But once look it steadily in the face, and the deception is confessed. I beg your readers to do this with me. If I seem tedious, I plead the importance of the subject to the vindication of the reasonableness of revelation.

The substance of what I have to say on the subject, may be compressed into a few words. I submit it to your readers and to the author (if my strictures should meet his eye), that the fallacy in his reasoning, consists in his

using the phrase "uniformity of causation," in two widely different senses, and gliding unconsciously from the one to the other.

To substantiate the allegation, I must be allowed to recite the steps of his argument, beginning with his definition of the main term, uniformity of causation. By uniformity of causation, is meant, "the physical truth, that the same causes produce the same effects" (p. 199); and two other phrases, "uniformity of nature," and "uniformity of the laws of nature," are to be understood as used synonymously with "uniformity of causation," (*id.*) Now, every writer is undoubtedly at liberty to make such definitions of his terms as he chooses, and can only be required to employ them invariably in the sense he has ascribed to them by his definition: but yet, if the words are defined to mean something different from their *ordinary* acceptation, there is no little danger, it must be confessed, of the definition being sometimes forgotten by the readers, or even by the writer, who may unconsciously slide into the more familiar use of the phrase; and so, by using it in two different senses, derive false conclusions from true premises. I may, if I choose, define *black* to mean the optical result of the reflection of all the prismatic colours, and *white* their absorption, by the substances which I designate as white and black respectively; and if I write a treatise on colours, commencing with these definitions, my readers will only be required to attach their previous idea of black to the term white, and vice versa, in order to understand me. But they will probably, and with good reason, be surprised at my new nomenclature, and feel confused by the perpetual exchange of contrary ideas and words. Some, possibly, overlooking my definition, may be amazed at my assertion of certain philosophical facts and experiments. Possibly I may myself, now and then, forget my definition, and unconsciously slip into the more familiar application of the words black and white, so that it shall be difficult for the philosophic reader to connect my premises with my conclusions. Though, therefore, I may define any word as I choose (a privilege, I am aware, more freely conceded in metaphysical than in physical treatises, for which reason, the above illustration may seem a bold one), yet it is plainly desirable, for the sake of clearness and consistency of thought, to adopt no definition of philosophical terms

which is remote from the customary and familiar usage of the same terms. And, for the same reason, if a new phrase be adopted by the philosopher, it is obviously desirable that such phrase should be an *abstract of the definition*—that it should be *verbally descriptive*, as far as it goes, of the thing meant.

How then stands the case before us? “Uniformity of causation” is in itself an ambiguous phrase. Before we come to the definition, we ask ourselves, whether it means “that, the same causes, *when they act*, always act uniformly;” or, “that the same identical causes, and no fewer and no less, *always do act*.” We do not know whether it is intended to predicate uniformity in the *causes themselves*, or in their *mode of operation*. We should be inclined (at least I was individually) to expect the former. But the latter is what the writer intends: the expression is used to signify, “the physical truth, that the same causes produce the same effects.” This, then, is the definition; let us beware of attaching any other notion to the phrase. By uniformity of causation, let us remember, it is not meant to affirm, or to deny, or to discuss the existence or modification of particular causes; but merely to maintain, that *when* causes are the same, effects are the same.

If I thus object to the title of the Essay, as not naturally suggesting the idea in the definition, much more do I demur to the propriety of employing the other phrases, “uniformity of nature,” and “uniformity of the laws of nature,” as synonymous with the “uniformity of causation,” defined as above. What do we customarily understand by the “uniformity of nature?” Is it meant to affirm, that *while* nature’s causes are the same, their results must be the same? Or do we predicate uniformity as attaching to *the causes*? What do we customarily understand by “uniformity of the laws of nature?” That *while* the laws are what they are, the course of nature must be what it is? or, that uniformity belongs to the *laws themselves*? Unquestionably the latter is the accustomed meaning of the phrases. When we say, without affecting philosophical accuracy, that nature is uniform, or the laws of nature are uniform, we certainly mean to express the conviction in general terms, that (without deciding the question of particular alleged exceptions) the laws of nature are uniformly the same; no more and no

less, and in no respect different at one time or at another. When the question of particular exceptions is understood to be before us, any one who maintains (with philosophical precision of language) the absolute uniformity of the laws of nature, is understood to assert, by his use of that phrase, that the laws of nature are absolutely invariable. He does not mean, that *while* the laws are the same, their operation is the same—that “the same causes invariably produce the same effects:” but he asserts, that the *laws always have been the same*, and that their operation has *therefore* been unbroken by miracles. He asserts, that the same causes *have invariably* existed, and no more, no fewer, in no respect different at one time or another; and *therefore*, that miraculous effects can never have ensued, merely natural causes having been in operation.

But in the Essay on the Uniformity of Causation, a new and unheard of meaning is ascribed to the phrases, “uniformity of nature,” and “uniformity of the laws of nature.” Here they only mean, “that the same causes produce the same effects.” They predicate nothing (as now used) as to sameness of causes. Let this be distinctly understood. In reading the Essay, let us carefully observe the new nomenclature. We must break off every previous association of ideas with the words in question. We must not suppose any reference intended to the nature, the number, or the modification of causes. Whenever, in this Essay, we read the terms, uniformity of causation, uniformity of nature, or uniformity of the laws of nature, we must only understand them to mean, that “the same causes produce the same effects.” We are in danger of looking for a deeper meaning in these full-sounding phrases; and it is therefore necessary to impress upon our intellect, that they are not descriptive, and that if so regarded they may prove deceptive. We must recur, over and over again, to the simple definition of their meaning, that *when* the causes are the same, the effects are the same. It would have been well, I must think, if this violation of the customary use of words had been avoided, particularly as the writer has incidentally employed yet another phrase in the sense of his definition, to which the objection would not apply, and which is indeed properly descriptive of the thing meant. At page 224, we find the expression, “uniformity in the *sequence* of causes and effects,” which I hesitate not to say, is the only expression

of the four, that properly suggests the idea expressed in the definition. It is curious to observe how the phrase comes to be thus enlarged. The writer is replying to an objection supposed to be urged against the confident calculation of actions or events, from the possibility of causes intervening, which were not before calculated on. "There is no want of faith in the uniformity of causation; our uncertainty by no means relates to the principle itself, but to the point, whether all the same causes and no other, are in operation; and if the event at any time turn out contrary to our expectations, we feel well assured of the presence of some extraordinary cause—an assurance evidently proceeding on the assumption, that if the causes had been the same, the effects must also have been similar. Thus, if my correspondent is unable to read my letter, if he no longer connect any meaning with the written words, I am convinced that some extraordinary calamity has befallen him. If the bookseller refuse to sell me his volumes, I feel no hesitation in ascribing his conduct to some particular motive, not usually at work in his mind;—all proving, not that there is a want of *uniformity in the sequence of causes and effects*, but that there is a different assemblage of causes; that some essential circumstance has been left out, or some unusual one has crept into the accustomed combination." (p. 224, 225). Thus, uniformity of *causation* turns out to be identical with uniformity of *sequence*. *Causation* and *sequence* are equivalent words. *Origination* and *result* the same. Is my optical illustration, in the proposed new nomenclature of colours applicable, or is it not?

The author has, however, I freely acknowledge, a right to his definition, if he will only keep to it. I only suggest, that had he selected the phrase, uniformity of sequence—instead of uniformity of causation, nature, and the laws of nature—his terms would have expressed his meaning, his readers would have been in no danger of misapprehending the meaning of the terms, nor himself of confusing very distinct ideas, and conducting an illogical argument.

(To be Concluded in our next.)

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The late Dr. Adam Clarke.

THIS learned and venerable man has been gathered to his fathers. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that he occu-



pied a station in a particular theological department which will not be readily filled. The niche is now empty—when will it again be occupied? Differing essentially in faith, we refuse not homage to his learning and his piety. Of the latter, few have doubted; and, with regard to the former, there can be no possible ground of question. Happy had it been for the improvement of man, had these qualities been employed in conveying to the world, simple and unsophisticated views of Christianity—elevating and dignifying conceptions of the nature and attributes of the Deity, and of the relations which subsist between Him and his accountable offspring. But many important views of religion were developed in his sermons, as well as in his erudite expositions of Scripture, which, although carrying with them no inconsiderable portion of the old leaven, have yet tended, in some degree, to the removal of a few of the deforming errors which mark the popular theology.

In his annotations on the Epistles, he triumphantly combats the revolting dogmata of the stern Reformer of Geneva; he was, indeed, the uncompromising enemy of Calvinism. For these things, he merits the approbation of all, who, without the scowl of bigotry on their brows, regard their fellow-men as children of the same heavenly Parent, and who believe that the *benevolence* of Deity is exercised in the moral administration of the universe. But, in conjunction with Calvinists, he held many of those doctrines, stamped with the patent of spurious orthodoxy, which are still hanging as dead weights on Christianity. He himself tells us, that he is a strenuous believer in the doctrine of the Trinity, although one great authority, out of a multitudinous list, that rejects, as a corruption of Scripture, the only text (1 John, v. 7) in which the least similarity to the polytheistic dogma of a triune Deity appears. He was, besides, one of that class who are habitually in the practice of libelling the justice and mercy of God, by maintaining that the blood of Christ being “sprinkled o’er the burning throne, turned the wrath to grace,”—thus magnifying the obedience of a dependent creature to such an extent, that the *goodness* of God is reduced to a diminutive point, if not absolutely blotted out. There are many other opinions to which we might refer, and which we regret to think could have found a residence in so cultivated a mind. But while such things are regarded by Unitarian Christians as deforming blots upon pure evangelism, they

will be viewed, and possibly lauded as excellences, by those who prefer a fallible leader to Jesus Christ, and the dictum of a creed-book to the teachings of the Gospel. Our present design, however, is not to dwell on this point. We wish to be understood as feeling regret, that the world has been deprived of the services of a learned and virtuous man; yet our sorrow may not spring from the motive which operates with men of another creed; for, whereas they may mourn for the death of an acute defender of a falling system, we ground our regret upon the fact of the world's losing a man infinitely more learned, and by many degrees more liberal, than the mass of those with whom he was accustomed to associate, considered either abstractedly with regard to the mere holding of opinions, or to the manner in which his theology was enforced.

It is currently reported that a monument is about to be erected to his memory; and, indeed, in this age of monumental erections, it would be passing strange if the ashes of Dr. Adam Clarke were permitted to moulder without a record to his fame. But of whatever form may be "the storied urn or animated bust"—of whatever character may be the inscription, we cannot forget, that other monuments to his theological fame exist in the following language, which he has adopted in speaking of the "Sonship of Christ," and of the use of reason in religion—inscriptions whose effects will probably survive that of the perishing marble.

"I trust," says he, "I may be permitted to say, with all due respect for those who differ from me, that the doctrine of the *eternal sonship* of Christ is, in my opinion, *antisciptural*, and highly *dangerous*; this doctrine I reject for the following reasons:—

"1. I have not been able to find any express declaration in Scripture concerning it.

"2. If Christ be the Son of God, as to his divine nature, then he cannot be *eternal*; for *son* implies a *father*; and *father* implies, in reference to the *son*, *precedency* in time, if not in nature too. *Father* and *son* imply the idea of generation; and generation implies a *time* in which it *was* effected, and a time also atecedent to such generation.

"3. If Christ be the Son of God, as to his divine nature, then the Father is of necessity *prior*, consequently *superior* to him.

"4. Again, if this divine nature were begotten of the

Father, then it must have been in *time*; i. e. there was a period in which it *did not exist*, and a period in which it *began* to exist. This destroys the *eternity* of our blessed Lord, and robs him at once of his godhead.

"5. To say that he was *bogotten* from all *eternity*, is in my opinion, absurd; and the phrase *eternal son* is a positive self-contradiction. ETERNITY is that which has no *beginning*, nor stands in any reference to TIME. Son supposes time, generation, and father; and time also antecedent to such generation. Therefore, the conjunction of these two terms, *son* and *eternity*, is absolutely impossible, as they imply essentially different and *opposite* ideas.

"The enemies of Christ's divinity have, in all ages, availed themselves of this incautious method of treating this subject, and on *this ground*, have ever had the *advantage of the defenders of the godhead of Christ*. The doctrine of the *eternal Sonship* destroys the deity of Christ. Now if his deity be taken away, the whole gospel-scheme of redemption is ruined. On this ground, the atonement of Christ cannot have been of infinite merit, and consequently could not purchase pardon for the offences of mankind; nor give any right to, or possession of, an *eternal* glory. The very use of this phrase is both absurd and dangerous; therefore, let all those who value Jesus and their salvation, abide by the Scriptures."

Without stopping to notice the attack which this last paragraph makes on the free grace of God in human salvation; we ask any candid reader to say, whether the Doctor's *five reasons* for rejecting the doctrine of the eternal Sonship of our blessed Lord, be not strictly UNITARIAN. Yet Dr. Adam Clarke professed to be a staunch believer in the antisciptural dogma of the Trinity, and a stickler for the supposed double nature and deity of Christ. When will Christians learn consistency of thinking, speaking, and acting? when will they cast behind them what is "absurd," and, to use the language of Adam Clarke, strictly "abide by the Scriptures?"

When? The Scriptures will be valued and treated as their sacred and enlightening contents merit, the moment the people practically embrace Dr. Adam Clarke's views of the use of reason in religion.

"The Sacred Writings," he observes, "are a system of pure unsophisticated reason, proceeding from the immacu-

late mind of God; in many places, it is true, vastly elevated beyond what the reason of man could have devised or found out, but in no case contrary to human reason. They are addressed not to the passions, but to the reason of man; every command is urged with reasons of obedience; and every promise and threatening, founded on the most evident reason and propriety. The whole, therefore, are to be rationally understood, and rationally interpreted. He who would discharge reason from this its noblest province, is a friend in his heart to the anti-christian maxim,—‘Ignorance is the mother of devotion.’”

“Revelation and reason go hand in hand; faith is the servant of the former, and the friend of the latter.” “The doctrine which cannot stand the test of rational investigation, cannot be true.” “We have gone too far when we have said ‘such and such doctrines should not be subjected to rational investigation, being doctrines of pure revelation.’ I know no such doctrine in the Bible. The doctrines of this book, are doctrines of eternal reason, and they are revealed because they are such. Human reason could not have found them out; but when revealed, reason can both apprehend and comprehend them. It sees their perfect harmony among themselves—their agreement with the perfections of the Divine nature, and their sovereign suitableness to the nature and state of man; thus reason approves and applauds. Some men, it is true, cannot reason, and therefore they declaim against reason, and proscribe it in the examination of religious truth. Were all the nation of this mind, *Mother Church* might soon re-assume her ascendancy, and ‘feed us with Latin masses, and a wafer God.’ Men may incorporate their doctrines in creeds or articles of faith, and sing them in hymns; and this may be all useful and edifying, if the doctrine be true; but in every question which involves the eternal interests of man, the Holy Scriptures must be appealed to, in union with reason, their great commentator. He who forms his creed or confession of faith without these, may believe any thing or nothing, as the cunning of others, or his own caprices may dictate. Human creeds and confessions have been often put in the place of the Bible, to the disgrace both of revelation and reason. Let those go away, let these be retained, whatever be the consequence. *Fiat justitia, ruat cælum.*”

These sentiments occasioned a great sensation among

the Methodist body, when first uttered. Pamphlets abounded, pointing out their pernicious consequences. But they have worked, and are still working their way. Fatal indeed they are to the authority of Wesley, and Calvin, and Athanasius; but they are the precursors of the true reign and paramount influence of Christ, and that must endear them to the Christian. S. T. B.

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*Remarks on Paine's Age of Reason, in a series of Letters addressed to the Readers of the Christian Pioneer.*

LETTER V.

MY FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,—Christianity is maintained in the world, not so much by the researches of the learned, nor the recommendation of the eloquent, as by its own moral worth; and the most prevailing evidence of the truth of the New Testament is, not the lengthened and profound treatises which are extant in behalf of its authenticity, but the stamp of excellence, not to say divinity, which it carries in almost every page. It appears to me to be comparatively a matter of small consequence, whether or not we can prove, that the books of the New Testament were written by the persons to whom they are commonly ascribed. The evidence of their truth is independent of their genuineness. That the books are in existence, the hardest sceptic cannot deny; and out of the books, taken as we find them, the truth of what they set forth can be satisfactorily deduced. One reason of this is, that they deal largely with those moral concerns that carry their own evidence with them. Utility and truth are convertible terms; that is useful which is true, and that is true which is useful. The New Testament is full of what is useful, and therefore full of truth; and this good is of so high, pure, and original a nature, as to repudiate a human and claim a divine origin. This moral evidence is indestructible. It is even less liable to perish than the conclusions of the mathematician or the discoveries of the man of science. The propositions with which they have to do, are separate from the train of evidence on which they rest, and only in connection with their evidence are they of value. Convulsions in society may, as they have done, destroy the evidence, and in that disunion would the good of the surviving truth all but perish; whereas a moral principle carries its evidence with

it, and meets with evidence wherever it meets with reception. Thus the annunciation of a moral truth is a gift to the race. It goes into society, and though it may rise and fall, it can never perish. It works its way; to be received, it needs only to be known.

I would particularly instance the character of Christ. It is, it has been, and will be the light of the world. Men look upon it, and feel as they do when they look abroad on the light of day, or around on their family living in peace and comfort, and feel that it is good. Do you ask for evidence of the truth of Jesus? Look on him; study his life. His object, his deeds, his words, are his testimonials. He is truth, because he was good. His doctrine is truth, because it is good; good for man in all ages, circumstances, and climes; for all ranks of society; for all degrees of excellence; in reference to our wants, our wishes, our hopes; in reference to our faculties, our ability; in reference to the constitution of external nature, and the workings of human society; it is universally good, and therefore true. I know of no better criterion of truth. Why are falsehood and theft and lust crimes, but because they bring misery? And why is the love of offspring and country a virtue, but because they create happiness? Is it not true, that we should do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God? and why, if not ultimately because it will be for our advantage? What then is good, durably and unchangeably good, is true; and therefore the Christianity of Christ is true.

I intend in this letter, to exhibit this argument as seen in the benevolence of Jesus. And you will take notice, that I am, in the references I shall make to the New Testament history, not taking the truth of the books for granted, but proving it. These are the writings, and out of them—apart from all historical details as to their origin—out of them, abundant evidence of their truth may be extracted. The argument I now purpose to allege, is not without a sanction. An eminent living critic has said, in speaking of that much debated question, the authorship of the Homeric poems:—"It must be a matter of perfect indifference to us, how or by whom the supposed works of Homer were really composed. The decision of that question cannot, in the slightest degree, affect our estimate of their quality. The Iliad and the Odyssey exist; we have them in our hands, and we should not set them the

less in honour, though we were to doubt the impress of any Homer's hand, any more than we should cease to reverence the genius or the ruins of Rome, because shepherds or worse may have laid the first stone of her walls."

The force of the argument now to be adduced, would be felt to be much more powerful than in the actual case, could it be presented to you, divested of the familiarity which attaches in men's minds to the chief features of the Christian religion. The eye may look on the sun so long as to cease to be dazzled by its beams; so the mind's eye loses its sense of what is morally grand and lovely, by the familiarity which use engenders. I believe there are few who could withhold their allegiance from Jesus, if they now learned, for the first time, that he existed in a country as illiberal and low as were the Jews of the first century, with all the excellences in full operation, with which he is invested in the Evangelical histories. What is the fact touching his benevolence? Simply, that in an age when the narrowest selfishness in theory, as well as in practice, was of all but universal prevalence; and in a country notorious before all others in this illiberal period, for bigotry and exclusion—a man devoid of the opportunities of rank or education—a man of the meanest class, with no associates beyond his family, and no acquaintance with modes of life and thought beyond his own country—a poor uninstructed, labouring man appeared, teaching the most enlarged benevolence, practising the most enlarged benevolence, and aiming at the most benevolent of objects. In the simple words of the history, he went about doing good; and like the good shepherd of his own beautiful description, he laid down his life for his sheep.

Let us descend a little into detail. His object, the object of his life and death, was the good of the world. He came that the world might not perish, but have everlasting life; and the good of eternity, he so blended with the good of time, that the first could be enjoyed only as the fruit of the second. His law of love was co-extensive with the habitable globe, and cotemporaneous with all the ages of endless duration. Now, in this object there is evidence of its own truth. It must be true, for it is good. It is suited to man, and therefore worthy of man's acceptance. Look at the divisions there are in the world, and say if it does not meet our wants. Think of your own love of life, and say if it does not meet the cravings of your hearts.

Advert to the faculties you have received at the hand of God, and say if it is not nicely adjusted to their nature, and if it does not open out before them the scope which they need, and for which they seem created. Human nature, as seen in the light of Christian benevolence, is invested with that perfection to which it is making advances, and for the attainment of which it seems to have been designed by its Creator from the first. There is unity and harmony, and good inconceivable, in the system of intelligent existence, when connected with, and under the influence of, the benevolence of Christ; otherwise, there is a mighty whole, if not without a plan, yet with an imperfect plan; and results are ever being produced, which have no conceivable object. The love of Christ in its present and in its final operation, is the harmony of the world. It vindicates God's ways to man; it raises man to that for which he is fitted, and for which he longs; and wherever it goes it brings peace and good will. Therefore it is true. In the record of the good it does and promises to man, it bears the stamp of divinity. It is worthy of God, for it is man's blessing. It came from God, for it agrees with all his arrangements, at the same time that it gives them a harmony and a completeness, of which apart from it they are utterly devoid.

(Letter V. to be concluded in our next.)

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#### REVIEW.

*Illustrations of Political Economy, No. 10.—Homes Abroad; a Tale, by Harriet Martineau. Charles Fox, London.*

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THE benevolent purpose of Miss Martineau in the present Number, is to show the advantages, national as well as individual, of emigration, as a remedy for the evils of over-population—that is, of a greater supply of labour in the market, than can be profitably employed. This object she succeeds in bringing before the reader with her usual force and effect, through the pleasant and instructive medium of another of her ingenious and beautiful tales. It is a pleasant thing to read and to be amused; but it is a much better thing to be made wiser, and to imbibe from the same source, and at the same time, pleasure and instruction. We can, indeed, imagine nothing more de-



lightful, than thus to have the treasures of a benevolent and powerful mind poured forth like a river, not merely for the gratification of our higher intellectual tastes, but to enrich with their deposition the soil of our own mind, and to leave deep in them the fructifying seeds of wisdom and truth.

The materials of this tale are simple enough, being merely an account of the removal of a family of labourers from an over-peopled parish in Kent, to the fertile plains of Van Diemen's Land. The principal part of the members of this family had been fast sinking under the withering influences of ill-requited labour, and the gloomy approach of pauperism. Two of the sons were to be sent out as convicts to that settlement, and the family determined to follow them, and to locate themselves in their neighbourhood. To accomplish this, they hired themselves out as labourers for a term of years—the expenses of their outfit and transit being to be repaid out of their wages. The upshot of their simple adventures, is, that before the expiration of their contract, the whole family are placed by their well-requited industry, in a state of comparative comfort and independence. The daughter is married and happily settled; and the virtuous son, the sagacious and industrious Frank, is left in the act of erecting a comfortable wooden house for his parents, himself and his expected bride; one of the convict sons, by the produce of his leisure hours, having had no passage-money or outfit to repay, is become a farmer himself, whilst the other and more worthless, has turned bush-ranger.

Such is a brief outline of this beautiful tale, which is full of Miss Martineau's sagacity and enlightened benevolence, no less than of her inimitable touches of nature, animate and inanimate.

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## THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, DECEMBER 1, 1832.

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IN "the Unitarian Chronicle and Companion to the Monthly Repository" for November, appeared an account of a meeting of the Bolton District Association; at which, on "health and prosperity to the advocates of Unitarianism in Ireland and in Scotland" having been proposed, the Rev. W. Smith is reported to have talked about the toads and vipers which croaked in the marshes of Ire-

land; and that such was the national closeness and caution of Scotsmen, that he was not certain he knew the real opinions of any one individual in Scotland with whom he had been acquainted. We have received a corrected report of the outline of Mr. Smith's observations, which we willingly insert.

"The Rev. William Smith, late of Dundee, and now supplying at the Meeting-house, Moor-lane, Bolton, deeply sympathised in the situation of the Unitarians, both in Ireland and Scotland. As a native of Ireland, he could not but feel much interest in the progress of liberal opinions, and unsophisticated Christianity in that distracted country. He could not anticipate much success to follow the efforts of those who advocated pure religion in Ireland, until his country escaped from the distractions of faction, and freed herself from the paralyzing system of misrule which pressed her to the earth. He did not condemn the Chief Governor of Ireland; he believed that Anglesey was Ireland's friend; but he was surrounded by the creatures of faction, his counsels were polluted by their vile suggestions, and the administration of law committed into the hands of the declared tools of a political party. Let the English Government banish from Ireland the faction which has so long preyed upon her vitals, and battered upon her miseries; let them be but for one short year as great strangers to her shores, as their counterparts in the animal creation, the toads and vipers to which Erin's green fields refuse sustenance or life; let Ireland be no longer cursed by a Church, national only in the taxes which she wrings from an impoverished people; let the administration of law be intrusted to those who will dispense it with impartiality, and not have one interpretation of the statute to suit the Protestant, and another to oppress the Catholic; let these benefits be conferred upon Ireland, and she will no longer weary England with her perpetual complaints, nor disgust her with narratives of the most shocking atrocities: let Ireland enjoy the repose which follows the impartial administration of law, and her agitators will be hushed into silence or perish in neglect; her feuds will cease; and her children joyously beat the swords and spears of unnatural warfare, into the ploughshares and pruning-hooks of moral cultivation.

"He had resided for some time past in 'the land of the mountain and the flood.' He had seen there the strong power of early impressions. From infancy the people of Scotland imbibed the doctrines of Calvinism. Was it any wonder that the progress of other opinions was slow? That progress he felt persuaded was sure. A country that stood the very first in the scale of intellect, could not long remain behind in the more valuable attainments of religious knowledge. Many difficulties opposed the labours of the Unitarian preacher in Scotland. His residence had not been sufficiently long, to warrant him in speaking confidently of the prospects of the Unitarian cause in that country. There was something in the national character, which rendered it a matter of time and difficulty to become correctly acquainted with the sentiments of those with whom the stranger associates. In his opinion, which he gave in submission to the judgments of those more experienced, the

great obstacles to the advancement of Unitarianism in Scotland, were the existence of ancient prejudices, long cherished associations, and a national cautiousness of character, which rendered even those who were favourable to the Unitarian doctrine, unwilling to peril their reputation or resources in the support of unpopular truth. The few who had courage to struggle with these difficulties, stood in need of our warmest sympathy, and he thanked the meeting for the expression of their fellow-feeling in the labours of their northern brethren. He begged permission, before sitting down, to propose the health of the Chairman, to whose addresses during the evening, he had listened with satisfaction and improvement."

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*Calumny of Unitarians and Unitarianism.*—It was long since said, let an individual have an opportunity of repeating daily the same remarks, and be they never so opposite to truth and fact, belief in their validity will ultimately be produced. Those who are attached to the common systems, whether in politics or theology, steadily and perseveringly act upon this principle. They know well the effect of misrepresentation on the popular mind. "I saw it in print, and therefore it must be true," is a delusion not yet banished from the thoughts of the many. "The statement has been made, and is uncontradicted; there must be some foundation for it," is another of the conclusions, as common as pernicious. The advocates of civil liberty and of Christian truth, have been very negligent on this matter. They have allowed the enemies of knowledge and freedom the vantage ground. They have resigned to them, without a conflict, the possession of the public ear. And yet they express surprise that the public are prejudiced and ignorant. Let the public be disabused, let the "false accuser of the brethren" be exposed, let knowledge be disseminated, and ignorance and prejudice will exist no longer.

It will not do to say, "the writer is too contemptible for notice," "the calumny is too monstrous for belief." The pamphlet would not be published, the calumny would not be uttered, were it not hoped, that consequences injurious to the cause attacked or defamed, would follow their dissemination. There is no individual who has not influence in a particular circle, and if only one mind be perverted by mis-statement, it is a solemn duty to man and to truth, that that mind be set right. No misrepresentation of Unitarianism should be allowed to pass unnoticed. By whomsoever uttered, it can do no good; but it may do harm. It may stay inquiry, and confirm prejudice, and rivet superstition. Its reprobation and exposure may excite investigation, and win the erring to truth and charity.

At the request of friends, and as an encouragement to others to vindicate their faith, and cause even defamation to issue in the dissemination and advancement of knowledge, we insert the following correspondence. In the Glasgow Courier of October 23, among a variety of "Cross Readings of the Newspaper, No. 2," reflecting on Lords Grey, Durham, John Russell, and others, appeared the following paragraph:—

“ On Sabbath evening last, an eloquent discourse was preached in the Unitarian Chapel, by the Rev. George Harris, to a crowded — assemblage of pick-pockets, prostitutes, and other disorderly characters who frequent the place.”

On seeing this “ Cross Reading,” a letter was immediately addressed to W. Motherwell, Esq. Editor of the Glasgow Courier.

“ Sir,—In your paper of yesterday, there is a paragraph in reference to myself, and the congregation with which I am connected, which has deeply wounded my feelings. It purports to be one of a number of ‘ Cross Readings of the Newspapers.’ If by any strange coincidence such a reading had occurred, a man of generous and Christian feeling would not have selected it for publication. To many readers the *nature* of ‘ Cross Readings’ will be wholly unknown; and it may therefore happen, that the paragraph will be quoted, and believed as the statement of a fact. But, if the paragraph was not selected from the Newspapers, but fabricated for the occasion, surely no palliation can be pleaded in behalf of a statement as false as it is malignant.

“ It will not do to attempt to pass it off as a joke. Religion is too serious and important a subject for newspaper ridicule. There are those who have sacrificed bright worldly prospects, and from whom friendship has averted its eye of affection, and on whom the cold world has scowled, and against whose principles the bigot has railed, because they thought that truth was with the few, and not the many; that it was more likely to be found at the feet of Jesus, than in splendid establishments, or in the Confessions of fallible mortals. Among the professors of Christian Unitarianism, many such individuals are to be found. By such a denomination, the ribald jests of a newspaper might be passed unheeded, were it not for the consideration, that such jests often make a deeper impression than sound reasoning or scriptural argument. For the sake of others, rather than of ourselves, is the paragraph noticed—that inquiry may not be stayed, and that the truth, as it is in Jesus, may have free course and be glorified.

“ To those unacquainted with the principles and conduct of Christian Unitarians, a defence even of these is necessary. The connecting together the characters that paragraph associates with myself, and the Chapel in which I officiate, is injurious. In many minds it will bolster up sectarian prejudices. It may prevent many individuals from listening to expositions of doctrines, on which I believe the improvement and happiness of mankind is dependent. It can only foster bigotry and uncharitableness. There is one consolation, indeed, amidst the obloquy that paragraph casts upon us, the blessed Saviour was assailed in a similar manner. Of him was it said, ‘ Behold a gluttonous man, and a wine bibber; the friend of publicans and sinners.’ And the servant cannot expect to be ‘ greater than his Lord.’

“ But this recollection, though a consolation to us, is no justification of the paragraph, or its author.—Why was I selected from among the Ministers of this city, as the object of its venom? Why was my Chapel pointed out as the special resort of the characters enumerated? Was it not solely on account of my advocating a

faith, which worldly power and fashion do not favour? Would you have dared to put forth similar 'cross readings,' respecting any other Minister, or place of worship in Glasgow?

"In justice to the Congregation, with whom I esteem it an honour and a happiness to be connected, let me say, that their characters will not shrink from comparison with those of any religious community in this City. The audience of last Sunday evening, was composed of a large assemblage of persons, of all denominations. With many of them, though opposed in religious profession, I am in habits of intimacy, and their moral worth is above suspicion. They assembled to hear the defence of the injured, and the vindication of the traduced, and the illustration of principles which dignify man and honour his Creator. And the conduct of the whole audience, both on that night, and previous Sunday evenings, could not be exceeded in its propriety, its deep attention, its earnestness in offering up, in the name of Jesus, the thanksgivings of grateful hearts, to the Father of mercies, the gracious bestower of every blessing.

"As an act of justice to them, to my Congregation, to the Unitarian denomination, and to myself, I respectfully, but firmly, call on you to make an apology as public as the offence, for the injury you have done to individuals, and a community, whose characters as disciples of Christ, and as members of the social community, are dear and sacred to them.

"Waiting your reply,—I am respectfully yours,

"GEORGE HARRIS."

"51, WEST REGENT STREET, 24th October, 1832."

"Courier Office, Glasgow, October 25, 1832.

"Reverend Sir,—I have your letter of yesterday's date, the receipt of which I would have acknowledged earlier, had it been in my power.

"The paragraph in the Courier entitled 'Cross Readings,' to which you direct my attention, is according to my notions, nothing more than one of those innocent political squibs, hundreds of which are every day appearing both on one side and the other of politics. Since, however, you imagine that, from the ignorance of the public as to the nature of Cross Readings, a literal construction may be put upon the paragraph, I can have no objection whatever to express regret, that through my means, your feelings or those of your Congregation should incur any chance of being wounded.

"As you have in your letter to me, stated at length the view you take of the matter, perhaps its insertion in the Courier, accompanied with a general expression of regret from me, that a political squib, neither meant to wound individual feelings, nor to injure the character or interests of any religious denomination, should have unfortunately afforded grounds for misconstruction, may prove satisfactory to you.—I have the honour to be,

"Reverend Sir, Your very obedient Servant,

"W. MOTHERWELL."

"Rev. GEORGE HARRIS, Regent-Street."

" W. MOTHERWELL, Esq. Courier Office.

" Sir—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this morning.

" You characterise the paragraph which has occasioned this correspondence, as 'nothing more than one of those innocent political squibs, hundreds of which are every day appearing both on one side and the other of politics.' I regard it neither as 'innocent' nor 'political.' It has reference not to a political meeting, but to a congregation, assembled in a chapel for religious purposes. I have not met with an individual who has understood it in a political sense. All have read and interpreted it as referring to the congregation and myself, solely in our religious connection as pastor and people. That its tendency is not 'innocent,' has already been verified. A 'literal construction' has been put upon it. It has been quoted by various persons, as the statement of a fact, and thrown out as such to several members of my congregation. Nothing which unnecessarily wounds the feelings of individuals or communities, or injures their reputation, can in truth be regarded as 'innocent.' I say this, not merely in relation to religious, but also to political subjects. As a matter of taste also, as well as of propriety, I object to the employment of these 'squibs' even in politics. In my judgment, they only entail disgrace on any party who degrade themselves by their use.

" You have offered to insert in the Courier, the letter of remonstrance I felt it my duty to address to you, and to accompany it 'with a general expression of regret,' 'that a political squib neither meant to wound individual feelings, nor to injure the character or interests of any religious denomination, should have unfortunately afforded grounds for misconstruction.' As that 'misconstruction' does exist, as the feelings of individuals have been grossly wounded, as a stain has, in the estimation of numbers, been fixed on a particular Congregation—whilst I accept your proposal for the insertion of my letter, I must also state, that a *particular* expression of regret will be necessary, and an explicit statement made, that not the slightest foundation exists for attaching the smallest moral taint to the Congregation of Christian Unitarians of this City.

" As much excitement of feeling has been called forth by the paragraph, it will be more satisfactory to both parties probably, if the observations you intend making in relation to this matter, are seen by me previously to publication. The manner in which a former attack on me by the Courier,\* previously to your connection with it, was passed over, seem to my friends to call for this arrangement.—I am, respectfully yours,

" Oct. 25, 1832."

GEORGE HARRIS."

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\* The allusion is to an envenomed attack on Mr. Harris, shortly after his settlement in Glasgow, made by Mr. M'Queen, the then Editor of the Courier, and the strenuous defender of West India Slavery, in consequence of Mr. Harris having preached a sermon, to prove "the incompatibility of Slavery and Christianity." A public apology was made by Mr. M'Queen.—*Edit.*

In the Glasgow Courier, October 27, Mr. Harris's remonstrance was inserted, preceded by these remarks:—

**“THE REV. MR. HARRIS.—CROSS READINGS.**

“To the following letter of remonstrance, from the Rev. Mr. Harris, of the Unitarian Congregation in this City, we willingly give insertion, for the purpose of correcting any erroneous impression in the mind of the public which may have arisen in consequence of the ‘Cross Readings from the Newspapers,’ which appeared in our paper of Tuesday last. As these were meant exclusively as political squibs, we regret to learn, that the one in which Mr. Harris’s name was mentioned should have been differently interpreted, or considered as referring, in any degree, to him and his congregation, in their religious connection as pastor and people. It not having been our intention either to give personal offence, or to wound Mr. Harris’s feelings as an individual—or to injure the character and interests of the Unitarian Congregation in this City, we have to regret, that, in this particular instance, our intentions have been misconstrued, and the feelings of individuals, as well as of a community, pained, whom we had no wish whatever to offend, much less to attach any moral stigma to their character as a religious body.”

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THE  
**CHRISTIAN PIONEER.**

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No. 77.

JANUARY, 1833.

Vol. VII.

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*The Parted Year.*

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I stood upon the sunless shore  
Beside Oblivion's sea,  
And saw its sluggish waves break o'er  
The bygone yesterday—  
The last of the departed year  
Join in the lapse of time's career,  
The pass'd eternity.—*Anonymous.*

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AND thy knell hath rung; and its echoes die  
O'er the ceaseless tide of Eternity:  
And thy web is woven, thy task is done,  
And thy clouds and thy sunshine—all are gone!  
And the germs of thy pride have for ever pass'd,  
And the forests moan 'neath the withering blast;  
And the hare-bell and lily and damask rose  
Have buried their heads in thy feathery snows.

Burst from thy Parent's icy cave,  
Thou didst fly in the bubbling fount to lave;  
Thou didst spread thy carpet of living green,  
And deck the earth in a velvet sheen.  
Thy Vernal bloom I remember well  
Into ripering Summer's beauty swell;  
Ay me! I wot how dazzled they seem'd  
On whom thy gorgeous glory beam'd.

And I saw thee leave Summer friends behind,  
And thy tresses flaunt in the Autumn wind;  
Luscious and mellow thy blessing pour  
With benignant heart from thy bounteous store.  
What wert thou when I saw thee last?  
Woes me! thou wert shivering beneath the blast;  
And thy beauteous covering—my heart yet grieves—  
Was strown on the earth in skeleton leaves.

Farewell, farewell to thee, THIRTY-TWO!  
Mother of woes and of pleasures too;  
Tottering and wrinkled thou yieldest thy sway,  
And thy pleasures and woes are away, away!  
Hearts that I loved in their sunny bloom  
Are mouldering now in the silent tomb;

O



And friends are parted—the youth, the sage,  
Manhood, and tender and helpless age.

And is this all we can dream of now?  
Must the cypress only bind our brow?  
If loved ones have blent with the valley's clod,  
There is hope and help in our fathers' God.  
Oh dark and cheerless our path would be,  
If we could not, JEHOVAH! confide in thee;—  
Gloomy, when months and years are gone,  
If hope and promise had with them flown.

What though the flowers have pined and died?  
They will spangle again the mountain side;—  
What though our lov'd ones tenant the tomb?  
They will rise to their home in freshen'd bloom.  
The sons of God, though time speeds away,  
Shall live and love through eternal day:  
This, while the tides of mortality roll,  
Like the bow of heaven, speaks peace to the soul.

Should the opening year its comforts pour,  
May love to God hallow every hour:  
If we fall into sin,—oh! be it forgiven;  
If pain,—be it turn'd to joy in Heaven!  
Oh! that, imbued with our FATHER'S love,  
Our thoughts were winged to worlds above,  
We could gaze upon the realms of the blest,  
And long to be for ever at rest!

EDINBURGH.

S. T. B.

*An Address to the Labouring Classes of Great Britain,  
on their Moral, Domestic, and Political Importance.  
By the Rev. J. R. Beard.*

MY FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,—Amidst all the complaints which the friends of their kind have to make of the present age, they must admit, and they ought to make the admission not grudgingly, but liberally, that it is pre-eminently distinguished for the virtue of beneficence. Many, during the last fifty years, have been the improvements in the arts and sciences; but a fairer and a nobler sight is presented in the merciful attention to the wants of the bulk of the people, which, during that period, individuals and societies have emulously manifested. What

an array of beneficent agents might one easily enumerate! So much, indeed, has been done for the people, that the people have, in some instances, I fear, unlearned the way to aid themselves, and been led to rely on the charity of others, rather than their own resources. If, however, this influence has injured some, evils of a worse kind, and with a wider diffusion, have injured others—injured, I fear, and that materially, the bulk of the labouring classes. Excessive taxation has abridged your comforts—in some cases, your means of subsistence—has too often driven those who were poor to beggary, and those who had a sufficiency to poverty—lengthened unreasonably the time of your toil, and thereby shortened the time for the improvement of your minds. Nor can I but deeply regret the many hard and opprobrious names that have been cast upon you, and the unkind and unchristian manner in which, in many instances, you have been cut off from the sympathies of the richer and more educated of your fellow-citizens. But while I blame others, I cannot acquit you yourselves. Many of you have done much to realize the accusations of your worst enemies, and to make your friends fear that efforts for your regeneration are hopeless. The bulk of the people never could have been in the painful state they are but by their own act. The influence of others would have been nugatory, had not its invitation been welcomed when it should have been withstood. Many of them are in want, because they have been shiftless and without forethought; and many vicious and wretched, because too idle to labour, and too thoughtless to seek knowledge. Yet, happy am I to know, and gladly do I bear the testimony, that there is a large, I hope increasing, portion of the labouring classes who are an honour at once to themselves, their country, and their kind—who are among the best and most useful members of the Christian community, and of the social commonwealth—and who afford in themselves ample illustrations of the blessedness of a virtuous and holy life. Such persons are the salt of the land, and they serve to point out to all how much goodness may exist in the labourer's bosom, how much happiness in his home, how useful he may be in this world, and how steadfast and bright his hope of a blissful eternity! In these excellent people I see the surest indications of your ability. What they are, all of you may become. Their conduct and their homes are specimens of what yours may be. Why not? Have you

not the same organs, the same faculties, the same aids as they? My friends, one and a great cause of the corruption of the many, is the low opinion that has been given out of their character. Unfortunately they have, in too many cases, taken up that false estimate, and having so done, proceeded by a natural consequence to act up to its representations. Men have been low because they were thought, and because they thought themselves low. Now, what I mainly wish is to free you from this pestilent error. Renounce it as your worst foe. Can you expect to rise above your own estimate of your own ability? A mean opinion of one's self, will of necessity, form a mean character. It is an effectual bar to the first steps towards mental or moral excellence. The consciousness of power it is that gives strength. The courageous conquer because they feel their spirit swelling in their breast, while the cowardly perish in their sense of littleness. Many become good, who feel they have the ability to be so. Drive from you, then, the baneful falsehood, whether it come to you from the pulpit, the press, or your own minds, that you must be low, that your nature is such that you are fittest to lead a life of degradation. On the contrary, whatever your character may actually be, feel assured that God has given you the power to improve it—greatly—almost without limits. In order to acquire this assurance of your own dignity, follow me in some considerations which are fitted to encourage it.

In lineage you are a man—one of that privileged race of beings whom God has permitted to bear his own image—to whom he gives a portion of his own understanding, and invites to share in his own immortality,—one of that race who alone, of all earthly creatures, have by searching found out God, seen the Creator through his works, discovered his attributes and his intentions from his acts and dealings, learned in part their duty and their destiny from the silent page of nature, and been thought by the great Spirit of the universe, worthy of his special and ceaseless care, and of supernatural disclosures of his will—worthy, that is, of the blessedness of immortality. You are one of that noble race of beings who have disclosed the courses of the stars, subdued the elements into their service, triumphed over the perils of the ocean, united the most distant parts of a disjointed world by an interchange of visits, thoughts, and advantages—wrought out from a state

of barbarism, when no safety was found on earth, and no city rose proudly on its bosom—when individuals had to dispute with the beasts of the forest, the plot of ground on which they passed the night, and the scanty food with which they hoped to appease their hunger—wrought out their own greatness in the improvement of their minds—in the discovery of the arts, comforts, and ornaments of life—in the acquirement of all the splendid trophies to their skill, their forethought, their industry, which may be seen profusely scattered over the face of the earth—and in the formation of that busy and full world of thought and feeling which presides over, impregnates, and adorns the intercourses of civilized life. You are of that noble race of beings who have furnished instances of every virtue—the patriot, prodigal of his noble blood for his country's good—the lover of his kind, travelling up and down the world to search out and put an end to wretchedness, and stopping only when the springs of life, destroyed and worn out in the labour of love, could play no longer—the good wife, abridging her own comforts to increase her husband's, and saving his life at the peril, perhaps with the loss, of her own—the good mother, whose first, chief, and last care was the welfare of her children, in seeking which she shortened her days, and, gaining the reward, was happy in the sacrifice. These worthies are your kindred. What they have been you may be. At least, a portion of their excellence is within your reach. They exhibit virtues which depend not on rank, but on humanity—not on the distinctions of society, but on the essential features of your kind: they are the virtues of men, not nobles—of mothers, and fathers, and citizens. Yes, it is a higher honour to have the blood of a man than of a king in your veins. Be proud that you are of the race of man: your rank is a small matter compared with your race. Does the thought cross your mind, that, being in humble life, you have not the power to be greatly good? You err. Goodness is peculiar to no class of society. A common and an equal Father has distributed with an equal hand the seeds of goodness and therein of happiness, over the whole surface of the habitable globe. Which of the more important virtues is there you have not the means of cultivating? Justice, sobriety, truth, kindness, the love of God and man, the improvement of time, and the preparation for eternity: tell me why you have not an interest in these virtues—what bar there

is in the way of your acquiring them. To none are they more needful than to the labourer. And though the effort may be great to make them your own, great will be the reward. No outlay repays so well, and with so much certainty, as the outlay of effort for the acquirement of virtue. It never returns void, but always with an increase proportionate to the labour bestowed. Now, these virtues contain in them the elements of true greatness. To be good is to be great. Whatever the fashion of the world may say, true greatness depends not on rank but character. And so it often happens, that in the humblest walks of life the truest greatness is to be found. No; you are under no disqualification for moral excellence. Cannot the labourer gain the mastery of his passions, of his temper?—cannot he refine his affections?—cannot he be diligent and scrupulous in the discharge of his duties—maintain an elevated tone and delicate sensibility of moral feeling? O yes; these rare virtues are limited to no rank. They are offered as the common heritage and the common blessing of humanity. Yes, I repeat, true greatness is within the reach of the labourer as much as that of the prince. Cannot the labourer maintain a mind as free from prejudice, cultivate a breast as rich in benevolence, love his God with a spirit as grateful and devout, embrace his child with a thrill as exquisite, order his house in obedience and affection as entire and deep, as can the proudest noble of the land? To whom are we to ascribe the wonderful creations of modern science, the adaptation of the discoveries in science to the arts of life, the multiplication of the productive power of these kingdoms? To whom are we to ascribe the education of the youthful poor—the benign machinery of the Sunday-school—the powerful check that vice has in consequence received—the increase of goodness which has ensued—the increase in order, cleanliness, sobriety, of domestic peace and comfort, of national prosperity, of those holy and sublime affections that ally the creature with the Creator,—to whom, but mainly to the people?—to those, at whose birth no fortune but what seemed adverse assisted, whose career no applause encouraged, whose reward was not the smile of kings, not patents of nobility, but only the silent approbation of their own minds, and the consciousness of growing excellence and increasing happiness! From your own ranks those have sprung who have most effectually used the power of the press, most

urgently pleaded the cause of the outcast and the destitute, and asserted the claims of sufferers under the diminution or the loss of their civil rights. In a word, there is no walk in life in which those are not found who but half a century since, were in and of the mass. The people have adorned the pulpit, the bar, the senate, and, by the native force of their character, made for themselves or their immediate descendants a way into the rank and halls of peers. Working men have raised themselves and their families not only ample but princely fortunes, and, what is more, have earned a name which the legislature has been proud to honour—which distant nations have united to extol, and which a late posterity will celebrate with constantly increasing praise. Working men, by their skill, their industry and enterprise, have contrived labour, and by labour food, education, comforts for untold thousands of their own class, and given a new vigour to the political constitution of which they formed a part, augmenting the happiness and the strength of all the portions and the whole of the social frame. But how? How have these wonders of modern times been wrought? How have the people indicated to themselves, by some rare but noble illustrations of what they are capable, the rank and the importance which they ought to possess? Not by low ideas of their capabilities; not by indulging in sloth and intemperance; not by reliance on the charity of others; but by their own act, by a consciousness of ability, by the employment of their own resources. They gained their power and worked their miracles, not in the tavern, but in the retirement of their own minds, and the pursuit of ceaseless industry. They felt their ability in their bosoms, and they gave their ability effect by frugality, sobriety, forethought, and labour.

(To be concluded in our next.)

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### *On the Moral Constitution and History of Man.*

#### CHAPTER XII.

ONE of the prejudices which prevails against the Christian Morality as a practical system, is, that it seems by its condemnation of riches, to lead to the doctrine of a community of property; and the first disciples appear to have understood it in that way, by their attempt to establish such a community. But this view of the subject, is a mis-

take. The system of Benevolence necessarily assumes for its basis, a system of property. If there was no variety in the circumstances of mankind, and no property in the products of industry, there could be no room for the exercise of benevolence, either in its active or passive forms. None would have any abundance to bestow, none any wants to supply. There would be no rich persons who could display their moderation by applying only a moderate proportion of their wealth, to their own personal gratifications—no poor who could show their contentment, by submitting cheerfully to the condition which God had appointed them. There could be no beneficence—no gratitude—no opportunities of doing *more* than justice—none of being satisfied with *less*.

We do not deny, that a state of society in which the circumstances of all were alike, would have its advantages; but it is not a state fitted either to the moral or physical condition of man, in such a world as this. It would require an ample provision of all the necessities and comforts of life, *directly* from the hand of nature. But nature only gives to man the *raw material*—he must create all by his industry; and the first law of such a system is, that the product of a man's labour should be his own. If this law is sometimes invaded by force, or by fraud, the condition of man is so much the worse; but even his best condition must rest upon it.

The bounty of nature, and the productive power of man, is mightily aided by the *division* of labour, and by the individual charge and interest which each man has of his own labour. By such means, a vast accumulation of wealth is obtained, which could not be obtained otherwise; and the only question remains, how shall this wealth be best distributed for the general benefit?—shall it be done by arbitrary authority—by a conventional law—or by the principles of benevolence? We say, by benevolence; because every interference of authority, or of law, with the fruits of individual labour, must check the motive to its exercise, and thus diminish the general production; but the principle of voluntary benevolence has a contrary effect. It *adds* an additional stimulus to our exertions. Thus, both with regard to moral and physical effects, the system of Benevolence is allied to, and rests upon that of property.

Nor is it necessary for any purpose either of benevo-

lence or of utility, that mankind should be all on a footing of equality, in regard to riches. It is enough that they have all the necessities and some of the comforts of life. Such a kind of generosity therefore on the part of the rich, and such contentment and patience on the part of the poor, as Christianity enjoins, would be quite sufficient to accomplish all that is desired, if men would heartily embrace its doctrine. Certainly, this would amount to a vast deal more than has been hitherto done; for while we deny that the Christian precepts contemplate a *community* of goods, they undoubtedly require a far more liberal *distribution*, than has ever yet taken place, or than has ever been considered *obligatory* upon them—by the great mass of persons who profess the Christian religion; ay, even of the serious and sincere part of them, for as to mere nominal Christians, we hold them out of the question.

It must be confessed, however, that there is some difficulty as to the mode of accomplishing their object, even if they were willing; and this affords a second handle or objection of which we are too ready to take advantage, so as to excuse ourselves altogether, or in a great measure, for not acting consistently with the precepts of our Master. It was not always so, however. The first disciples of Christianity were not deficient in benevolent principles; they had heard the words, and seen the actions of the Lord. *They* were fully inspired by them, as regarded his *morality*, although as Jews or Jewish proselytes, they continued under some prejudices, and in ignorance, in other respects, concerning the liberal and Catholic character of the new dispensation.

In respect of Morality, however, the early disciples, with the first and fresh zeal of persons, on whom a new and brilliant light has just arisen, regarding the subject of philanthropy and benevolence; and to which light the moral instinct of man always has responded, and always will respond, before it is chilled with the calculations of fear, of self-interest, or with the difficulties it has to contend against;—with such a first and fresh zeal (I say), the primitive disciples of Christianity embraced its Morality, with all their hearts and souls, and even went the length of trying a community of goods; but it would not do. And their practical failure, probably, brought even their principle into some disrepute; or at all events, furnished an excuse to others, who were too ready to avail themselves of it,



for giving up any attempt to gain the same end, by more practicable means.

It may be useful here to investigate the error of the primitive Christians, and of some others on this subject, that we may distinguish between what is only accidental, and the effect of human error, and what is essential and of divine authority in the matter. In the first place, we may remark, that the primitive Christians committed an error in thinking it practicable for such a small body of men as they were, to adopt any rule of conduct, *as a society* so completely at variance with the great mass of society, with which they were surrounded. To be sure, they had the example of the Essenes (a Jewish sect) before them, and probably they were influenced by it. But the Christian Church was totally different in its constitution and object, from any such society. It was in no sense like any Corporate or *Monkish* Body. The Church was *open to all sorts of men*, without any noviciate, and without submitting to any arbitrary authority or rule; and it had for its object the regeneration of society or mankind *at large*, and not the institution of a peculiar *sect*. All sects and corporations have a private interest distinct from the public; and therefore it was imprudent for the Church to present any temptation to such private interests and passions, whereby men of improper character might be induced to join it; and whereby, even those who were so far sincere in their profession, might be tempted to mix inferior motives with their better principles. Now, the prospect of so easily getting the advantage of a public pecuniary fund, and of living without the necessity of labour, presented exactly such temptations.

There was also another error in the scheme. The gifts of all those who contributed to the public fund, were placed in the hands of the Apostles and Deacons, to be by them distributed according to the wants of the community. Now in this, and in all similar regulations there is a returning to the principles and rules of Justice, which is fatal to the very essence of Benevolence. Whenever a rich man sold his possessions, and put the funds into the hands of the Apostles or Deacons—the distribution of such funds, by these official persons or trustees, was no longer an act of Benevolence: it was a mere matter of justice, or of legal duty; and the persons supposing themselves intended for the receipt of the funds, conceived themselves entitled to

*claim* their share, as a matter of *right*. Thus, we find in the book of the Acts, "that in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring among the Grecians, against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration;" yet the business had hitherto been under the charge of the Apostles themselves, of whose integrity and impartiality there was no room to doubt. The fact was, that the cause of the complaint arose out of the very nature of the thing. The Apostles, indeed, very good naturedly and simply ascribed it to their want of leisure to attend to the affair, and deputed it to the Deacons. But this did not remedy the evil, so that after a time the scheme was abandoned.

Another example of the same sort is to be found in the operation of the Poor Laws in England. Their design was benevolent, and in the absence of a better system they are practically useful, or under existing circumstances, even necessary; but in regard to the feeling engendered by their operation, between the rich and the poor, it is quite the reverse of benevolence on the one side, or of gratitude and affection on the other. On the contrary, they have given rise to the most exasperated feeling, law-suits, and vexations, and all because the administration of the system is placed under the principle of Justice—of what *must be done* on the one side, and may be *claimed* on the other, as a matter of *right*.

In both cases, the error arose from taking the operation out of the province of Benevolence, and of thereby suppressing the sentiments of generosity and of humanity—of patience, meekness, gratitude, and other moral qualities, in all which the peculiar essence of true virtue consists. God hath made the world such as it is, for the very purpose of being a theatre on which such a system should be displayed. As to how this should be done, we will speak of that at another time; at present we are only pointing out errors and mistakes, and the objections which are grounded on them.

A second objection to our general doctrine about benevolence, is, that however beautiful it may appear in theory, mankind at large are not susceptible of being governed by it. They have never been so hitherto, and how can we expect them to be so in future? Talk as you will (such objectors will say) there is always some practical difficulty in the case; it is easy to say *if* mankind would acknow-

ledge your principles, all would be well, but either they will not, or cannot, it matters not which; self-interest or a regard to our own immediate rights and property, has hitherto been the governing motive of human action, and it is in vain to expect it ever to be otherwise.

- We reply, that self-preservation, and in so far, self-interest, is indeed the first law of nature, in point of *order*. We must secure our *existence* before we can attend even to our own *well-being*, and much less that of others. This is the condition and the law of life with all living creatures in this world. But the glory of man, above other creatures in this world, consists in his capacity of going beyond and rising above the mere consideration of animal existence; and the moral instincts and intellectual faculties by which he is urged to do this, furnish the means of making him pass from the lower to the higher development of his character. The cultivation of these higher faculties has been greater of late, than in the early ages of society, and it will be greater still in ages to come. We are not entitled, therefore, to conclude from what has been the case, to what will be.

Moreover, these common-place objections about the moral incapacity of mankind to attain specific degrees of social improvement, all refer to the laws of justice. It is perfectly true, that the passions, appetites, and interests of men are so strong and urgent, and their situation often so difficult, that the best of men will be led astray *sometimes*, and the majority *frequently*; so that all speculations about individual or social perfectibility, which rest upon the supposition that men can be made to act with perfect regularity and justice, are Utopian.

But if we rest our hopes on the system of Benevolence, the case is altered, for while it aims at a higher principle and standard of virtue than justice, it likewise makes allowance for greater defects. It contemplates the occurrence of injuries, but it provides the corrective of repentance on the one hand, and forgiveness on the other. It assumes the existence of imprudence, of misfortune, and of poverty, but provides the cure of liberality and generosity. It admits the plea of individual weakness, but it offers the aid of social and of heavenly strength. The system of Benevolence is every way suited to the character and circumstances of humanity, and therefore it can accomplish what other systems cannot.

The impracticability of justice is occasioned among other things by the *sudden* force of temptation, of passion, of circumstances, and of mistakes, against which no man can at all times guard. Benevolence counteracts and opposes these errors, by a calm, steady, and growing principle of action, which it is practicable for any man to admit and to cherish, and which will increase in power, in proportion as he does so. For example, a man may be prejudiced or incensed against his neighbour, and therefore say or do, on the spur of the occasion, *what he ought not*. That is a *sudden* impression. But if he wish to do his neighbour a service, to repair or to forgive an injury, these things require coolness and premeditation. In the first case, he fails because he is *surprised*. In the second, he *succeeds* because he is *prepared*. Hence, it is more *practicable to do good* than to *avoid sin*; that is to say, if we are desirous of doing so. This is equally characteristic of human nature and of the system of Benevolence; and therefore, when they are brought into harmonious correspondence with each other, effects will be produced far beyond our former experience. The victory is not to be gained by the negative qualities of justice, and by remaining on the defensive, but by the positive energies of benevolence and by active operations.

(Chapter XII. to be concluded in our next.)

### On Uniformity of Causation.

(Continued from p. 129.)

LET it be distinctly understood, that by the "uniformity" spoken of in four different expressions, the author only means *uniformity of sequence*; and that the Essay professes only to prove the fact implied in the definition (with, of course, its legitimate inferences), that *when causes are the same, effects are the same*. Whether causes are always the same or not, he does not discuss. The first six Chapters of the Essay, are employed in developing and proving the alleged uniformity in the sequence of causes and effects; and the seventh, applies the principle to the subject of evidence, particularly to the evidence of testimony. With the remaining three chapters, I have no direct concern at present. Chapter I. maintains, that the assumption of the uniformity of sequence is among the number of those "truths which necessarily arise in the

mind in certain circumstances, and which are not the result of any logical deduction." The author does not call it an *instinctive* principle, but a primary principle of reasoning—a "principle of immediate belief," not logically deducible from any simpler principle, but involuntarily assumed by the mind. With this representation I perfectly accord. The subsequent Chapters illustrate the matter, not by attempting to bring logical proof of the correctness of the principle, but by showing in a multitude of instances, that it is beyond logical proof, and is perpetually assumed by the mind in every process of reasoning. Chap. II. shows that "the uniformity of causation [sequence] is assumed with regard to the *past* as well as to the future." Chap. III. that it "cannot be established by experience and testimony." Chap. IV. that it "is assumed in all our conclusions respecting *mental* as well as physical phenomena." Chap. V. and VI. that "our certainty and uncertainty in relation to *moral*, are of the same nature as in relation to physical events." And Chap. VII. is entitled, "on the uniformity of causation [sequence] as the fundamental principle of physical and moral evidence." The doctrine of each of the first six Chapters, appears to me irrefragably true (so little illustration does the doctrine of the uniformity of sequence seem to need); but not a few of the illustrations appear to me inapplicable, and to betray the double meaning which I maintain the writer has attached to his principal terms. This I shall endeavour to show presently. But first, supposing these terms never to have lost, in the course of the Essay, the simple meaning given by the definition; let me ask, how the premises bear out the conclusions in the seventh Chapter?

On the subject of the credibility of testimony, our author remarks (p. 257), "Assertions are frequently made, which *in themselves imply a breach of the uniformity of causation*. From such cases, the conclusions already established remove all difficulty. To weigh probabilities, to determine what credit is due to two sets of conflicting circumstances, neither of which, as far as our knowledge extends, is irreconcilable to the *usual course of nature*, is often a nice and arduous task; but if the principles of this Essay are correct, it is easy to see what reception ought to be given to assertions *professedly implying* a deviation from the uniform succession of causes

and effects. Suppose, for instance, any person to affirm that he had exposed a cubic inch of ice to a temperature of 200 degrees of Fahrenheit, and that, at the expiration of an hour, it had retained its solidity. Here is a sequence of events asserted, which is entirely at variance with the *admitted course of nature*; and the slightest reflection is sufficient to show, that to believe the assertion, would involve a logical absurdity. The intrinsic discrepancy of the facts could never be overcome by any possible proofs of the truth of the testimony."

Again, p. 265, "To reject testimony in any case where it is brought to establish a *professed deviation from the uniform sequence of causes and effects*, can never imply a departure from that uniformity, while to admit it, would, by the supposition, necessarily involve one."

So, p. 266, "Should any man affirm himself to have been an eye-witness of any event *contrary to the usual succession of causes and effects*, such as those above adduced, I might consistently reply to him in the following terms:—'I have no grounds whatever for believing what you say. You assert that an event has taken place quite at variance *with the observed course of nature*; but if I once give up the uniformity of causation or of the laws of nature, I may account for what I hear, by supposing that your senses have deceived you, or that your tongue utters words which you do not intend, or that my ears have acquired the property of changing the sounds transmitted to them, or any other mutation which it is possible to conceive.'"

Now, remembering our *definition*, I in vain attempt to suppose any assertion which can "in itself imply a breach of the uniformity of sequence." No man, as far as I know, has ever offered his testimony "to establish a *professed deviation from the uniform sequence of causes and effects*." When any one alleges uncommon effects, he attests or supposes uncommon causes. If any man declared he had exposed ice to a heat of 200 degrees, and that it had not melted, he would declare it as proof of the intervention of a preternatural cause. When a person attests a miracle, he still involuntarily assumes the "fundamental principle of evidence and expectation," that like causes have like effects, and that unlike effects must consequently spring from unlike causes; he still maintains the "uniformity of sequence in causes and effects," only

he maintains, that, in the language of the author already quoted, "there is a different assemblage of causes; that some essential circumstance has been left out, or some unusual one has crept into the accustomed combination." (p. 225.)

Assertions are indeed often made, which (in the *ordinary* use of language) are "irreconcilable to the *usual course of nature*," "entirely at variance with the *admitted course of nature*," "quite at variance with the *observed course of nature*," as our author asserts in the above quotations. But we are bound to suppose that by these three additional phrases, he still means no more than *uniformity of sequence*, which uniformity of sequence has never in fact been alleged to be broken. They are obviously used as synonymous to the other expressions, designating the uniformity defined at the beginning. The author had an unquestionable right to affix what meaning he chose to these terms; but we ought to have been apprised of it, as we were of the meaning assigned to the others. But, in fact, I am convinced any thinking person must perceive, that all the terms in question in the above passages, are used in a *different meaning from that given by the definition*. The defined terms are used synonymously with the others as ordinarily understood; not these synonymously with those. The definition is forgotten, and the words have recovered their usual acceptation. Either this is the case, or the argument finds no application. If the usual, the observed, the *admitted course of nature*, mean any thing different from the fact, that the same causes have the same effects, then the main terms of the argument have found two different senses in the course of the Essay. If the sense of the terms be the same throughout, then there is not an instance supposed by the Essayist. I know not how an instance is supposable, of testimony being given to any professed deviation from the uniformity of sequence. The argument is, on the one hand, unsound, if the main term is defined in one sense, and used in another; and on the other hand, if the argument is logical in itself, it is inapplicable to the consideration of the weight of testimony in cases of alleged miracles.

That the former is the real state of the matter, I have no doubt of making apparent. Only compare the two following passages (both already quoted), and say whether "uniformity of causation" means the same thing in both.

"If my correspondent is unable to read my letter, if he no longer connects any meaning with the written words, I am convinced that some extraordinary calamity has befallen him; \* \* \* all proving, not that there is a want of *uniformity* in the sequence of causes and effects, but that there is a different assemblage of causes." (p. 224). Yet, at p. 264, the writer thus replies to a supposed attestor of an event contrary to the usual succession of causes and effects:—"If I once give up the uniformity of causation, or of the laws of nature, I may account for what I hear, by supposing that your senses have deceived you, or that your tongue utters words which you do not intend, or that my ears have acquired the property of changing the sounds transmitted to them; or any other mutation which it is possible to conceive." And why not suppose, in the latter case as well as in the former, that "some such extraordinary calamity has befallen" either your friend's tongue, or your own ears? No mutation which it is possible to conceive, will destroy uniformity of sequence. Change both the cause and the effect, and the relation is preserved. A different assemblage of causes—some essential circumstance having been left out, or some unusual one having crept in—may account for a man giving false testimony at one time, and true at another; for one event being accordant with our expectations, and another contrary to them. Uniformity of sequence characterises every case alike. This is the uniformity of sequence of the definition and of the former passage, but not of the latter passage. *Here* the "uniformity of the laws of nature" has acquired its customary meaning. *There* the language is that of the reasoner who maintains the unbroken uniformity of causes. And this is the fallacy in the argument of the Essay. Terms are defined in an unusual acceptation, and unconsciously used sometimes as defined, sometimes as understood before being defined.

The commencement of the 7th Chapter, which proposes to apply the principle developed in the preceding ones, to the subject of evidence, may furnish another proof, that at that stage of the Essay the double meaning of the phrase had been admitted. "It is manifest from the foregoing representations, that it is solely by assuming the *uniformity of causation*, that we can penetrate into the future. Without this assumption, we could not predict the commonest occurrence, nor calculate on



any property of mind or of matter. Every prediction and every calculation on the future, is in fact an inference from causes to effects, and implies two things; first, a knowledge of the past sequences of causes and effects; and secondly, an assumption that the same sequences will take place hereafter." (p. 249.) Now, if the defined meaning of uniformity of causation be adhered to, is not something else implied besides the two things mentioned? To predict the commonest occurrence, it is not enough to know that such and such causes invariably have produced such and such effects, and to assume (as we unavoidably do) that the same causes will hereafter produce, whenever they operate, the same effects. We must also know what causes will, in any case, be in operation; or must assume, that the *causes* which decide their sequences, will be the same as they have been. There is no doubt, that, in reasoning from the past to the future, we do make the assumption of the *continued uniformity of causes*. But this is quite a distinct thing from the assumption of the uniformity of sequence. One assumption is, that *if* the causes are the same, the effects will be the same; the other is, that the causes *will* be the same; and the conclusion hence arises, that the effects will be the same. With what propriety the one assumption can be styled the "fundamental principle of evidence and expectation," when the other is equally necessary, I cannot comprehend; and I believe it might be fairly presumed from the mere title of the Essay, together with the definition so often quoted, that there must be some flaw in the argument. For who would not say, on hearing the principle explained to be, that "the same causes produce the same effects;" "from this principle by itself, I can form no expectation, nor judge of any evidence. A *conditional sequence* tells me nothing, without a *positive antecedent* with which to connect it." A careful reader will perceive, that the fundamental principle of uniformity of sequence, though defined as has been stated, is made to include, in its application to the subject of evidence, the other principle also of uniform antecedence, being veiled under the ambiguity of uniform causation, and partaking by degrees the import which cannot easily be dissociated from such terms as the uniformity of nature's laws, and the observed and usual course of nature.

(To be concluded in our next.)

*Education of Scottish Unitarians for the Ministry.*

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR,—There lately appeared in your valuable and highly useful Magazine, a notice of the resignation of the pastoral charge by the Rev. William Smith of Dundee. I read the notice with the same feelings with which I am sure it was penned, those of sincere admiration for the exertions which that gentleman had made in the sacred cause which he advocated, and sincere regret at the necessity which put a period to those exertions in Scotland.

That it is no trifling sacrifice for a young man of good education, to forsake the prospects which a further residence in his own country, and among his own connexions, might reasonably be supposed to hold out to him, in order to undertake the pastoral charge of a small congregation in another land, professing opinions everywhere spoken against, will be readily granted by all whose nerves are not made of iron—whose hearts are capable of feeling warm attachment to the friends and associates of their youth—and whose memory lingers round the place of their nativity. On reading the notice to which I have alluded, I could not forbear picturing to myself, the change which such a settlement must necessarily make in the habits and feelings of him who accepts it. I contrasted the numerous friends on one side the Channel, with the strangers on the other; the comparative wealth and station which perhaps distinguished the members of the household of faith in his native place, with the fewness and poverty of those among whom he was about to sojourn. I reflected on the cold looks of hatred and contempt which would greet him on almost every side, from those who regarded him as a thief climbing into Christ's fold; and I thought of the damp which would strike his own heart, as he felt that there was something more of bitterness in those looks than he had been wont to encounter when he had numbers and influence on his side.

Sorry should I be to think or say, that the animating consciousness of being engaged in the holy cause of divine truth, would not be amply sufficient to support any man of strict integrity, under all the trials of such a position. But nevertheless, those considerations which I have mentioned must increase the weight to be endured by the Unitarian minister, *brought up* in the bosom of a flourish-

ing society, and *settled* where the struggle of the society is a struggle for existence.

If a minister so educated and so settled, had to encounter, by the force of contrast, greater difficulties and hardships than another would, brought up under different circumstances, the questions occurred to me: What was the reason that there should be a necessity for subjecting *any one* to such trials? Why should Scotland be obliged to send to Ireland or to England for ministers? The obvious reason, that there are no young men, natives of Scotland, educated expressly for the Unitarian ministry, is not sufficient. I want the *reason of this reason*. It is true, that there *are* no such young men; but *why* are there not?

If I have been rightly informed, there is at present not one young man among the Unitarians of Scotland, even designed for the Unitarian ministry. I cannot but regard this as a singular anomaly. Would there be any means so likely to be efficient in promulgating Unitarianism in Scotland, as a supply of *native* Unitarian ministers? Would not a young Scotchman enter upon the office of Unitarian minister in Scotland, with peculiar fervour and with the most flattering prospects of success?—on the very ground where the giants of the Reformation struggled and died!—on the very ground where religious truth early reared her sacred standard, undaunted by persecution, and unchecked even by the inroads of death!—on the very ground where his sainted countrymen, his *forefathers* it might be, stood firm and devoted in the cause of God's glory and man's salvation. Sir, if the *amor patriæ* has its use, for what nobler purpose could the Scottish Unitarians stimulate it into vigorous exercise, than for this?

Why should Scotland be obliged to *import* her Unitarian labourers? Why should they trust to the Calvinistic Divinity Hall, for a supply? Why grudge the trifling expense of keeping a small number of her sons a year or two longer at home, and availing herself of the great, and yet not expensive advantages of her admirable Universities? Would the prospect of a future livelihood be so precarious, as to render such a step imprudent in the Unitarian parent? I must think that if the son was possessed of fair average abilities, of industry, piety, and zeal, there could not be a question of final, of brilliant success.

We have Societies in existence even now, unsupplied

with Ministers, who would, with an effort, offer at least a *subsistence* to any person competent to undertake the pastoral office among them. If *one* was unable to do this of itself, *two* would join together; and fresh Societies would spring up, and the old ones would increase; and the young man that commenced with being the Minister of two congregations, might possibly end in being one of two Ministers to the same congregation. In fact, even supposing that the love of the great cause, was not sufficient of itself to stimulate him to make the necessary exertions, he would at any rate, be obliged to make a living by some means or other. *That* he *must* make, that he *could* make, and that therefore he *would* make.

If a congregation was not ready made for him, among an increasingly intelligent and inquiring population, he would make one for himself. At any rate, Sir, a few experiments would not be amiss. But supposing the most unfavourable result, the whole evil would amount to but a few years lost. *Lost* I should not have said, for *lost* they would not be. The effects of those few years, spent in preparing for, and discharging such an office as that of a teacher of truth and piety, would be lost neither in this world nor in the next. But suppose that a young man, making the experiment which I recommend, were to fail of success in Scotland, would he not be very likely to succeed in England or Ireland, where our religious opinions have a firmer footing? They of the south sometimes say, "Set a Scotchman anywhere, and he will light on his feet." In other words, to whatever plough a Scotchman puts his hand, his industry, cleverness, and perseverance will secure him success. Why, then, should he not put his hand to the plough of Unitarianism? I have little fear, but that the soil being so rich, the seed so sound, the harvest so promising, he will do any thing sooner than look back.

I sincerely wish, Sir, that some more able correspondent would treat upon this matter, for I am convinced that it is one of great, of vital importance to the success of Unitarianism in Scotland. I have given but a hasty, and I fear a carelessly expressed statement of my own feelings and convictions on the subject. But I should like to see it discussed in the pages of your Magazine, by some one who with the requisite information, would unite a warmth of zeal in the cause of God's truth, which without overlooking the real difficulties attending the execution of some

such plan as I have now been proposing for the spread of Unitarianism, would be superior to the timidity which will doubt and waver till the end of all things is come.

I am, Sir, yours with great respect,

Nov. 14th, 1832.

PHILO-SCOTUS.

*Remarks on Paine's Age of Reason, in a series of Letters addressed to the Readers of the Christian Pioneer.*

(Letter V. concluded from p. 137.)

THE benevolence of Christ, is original as well as good. Search the histories of ancient date, inquire of the wise who lived before the Saviour, was such an object as that of living and dying for man, ever even conceived, much less formed? Prior to Christ, benevolence had never extended itself beyond the limits of a country, scarcely the walls of a town. There had indeed been instances of strong and tender personal friendship, but none of large and pure benevolence. Socrates is almost, if not quite the only one who emerged from the universal atmosphere of selfishness, and he did not extend his views beyond one city. Whereas Jesus, while he felt and manifested the purest and tenderest feelings of private friendship, embraced in the object of his life the whole race of man, and ever cared most for those whom others despised. He came to seek and save that which was lost. "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." These were his principles, and by these was his conduct shaped. Whence this unapproached superiority in Christ? Whence the universality of his benevolence? Whence did he learn his merciful attention to the poor and depraved? What state, what philosopher of Greece or Rome was his instructor?

The originality is the more striking, if you regard him as a Jew. Narrow-heartedness was the national characteristic of Judea, as much as the military spirit was that of Rome, as much as pre-eminence in letters distinguishes the memory of Athens. Illiberality and Judaism are indissolubly blended in the mind of him who has studied its spirit. Judea put all the rest of the world under the ban of its Pharisaism, and was in return despised by all civilized nations. "Where," I ask in the words even of an unbeliever, I mean Rousseau, "where among his own people did Jesus acquire that pure and elevated moral tone of which

he alone has given at once the lesson and the example? From the bosom of the most furious fanaticism, the highest wisdom raises its voice, and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues honoured the lowest of nations." The New Testament itself, gives but too many vouchers to the illiberality of the Jewish nation. One reason with the hierarchy for putting Jesus to death was, that he was the friend of the people; and the very fact that the Jews were incapable of feeling the worth and divinity of his character, that they not only had no sympathy with him, but regarded him with bitter and ceaseless hostility, is of itself argument enough of their narrowness of heart. Indeed a greater moral contrast can hardly be imagined, than that which exists between the spirit of Judaism in the first century and the spirit of Christ. In the originality, then, of his benevolence, I see indubitable proofs of the divinity of his mission. His, like every other goodness, must have had an origin. What was in contrast with the age in which he lived, the age could not invent. What it had not in itself, it could not impart. If, then, we thus exclude the possibility of fiction, the benevolence of Jesus is a reality; and if that benevolence is superior to what earth could produce, we are constrained to assign for it a divine origination. Those who have studied human society, know well that individual excellence always bears a relation to the age in which it is produced. This, in fact, is nothing more than saying that the effect must be proportional to the cause. It is true, indeed, that strong original powers do often carry an individual far above and beyond his age; but never to such an extent as to produce the disparity which exists between Christ and his contemporaries. In ordinary cases the difference is in degree; in Jesus it is in kind and degree too. There was between Jesus and his age, all the disparity there exists between the law of selfism, and the law of disinterestedness; the spirit of individuality, and the spirit of universal brotherhood. And the very first opponent that Christianity had to encounter, and which it cost much to subdue, was the narrowness of Judaism. Even converts to Christ, could not imagine that their new Master was sent to the Gentiles, as well as themselves. Still did they think and strive to make the fold of Christ, and the mercy of God, as restricted as their own bosoms. For myself, I cannot but think that he who believes, not the miracle, but the impossibility, that the benevolence of

Jesus grew up, in and out of the spirit of Judaism—is prepared, unbeliever as he may be, to receive not only the miracles of the Gospel, but all the absurdities which have canonized Romish Saints, and bound in fetters their deluded devotees.

And then, if this was a fiction, by whom? By a few fishermen of a despised province, of a despised and petty nation. If it be asked, how I know the writers were fishermen, I answer, the whole narrative shows they were men of little and uncultivated minds. Their precise occupation is a matter of no consequence. Could these men, with all their littleness, with all the bigotry of their country, have conceived the object to which Jesus was devoted? If so, then in regard to human actions, all proportion between cause and effect is lost. Darkness may produce light, and light darkness. We may literally realise the fancy, and find Miltons in all the full maturity of perfection, Miltons in ploughmen, and Newtons at the loom. There existed not in the bosoms of his historians, even the elements of the benevolence of Christ. Feigned as well as true characters bear a relation to the age in which they are produced. All human creations pre-suppose a chaos out of which they are made; and the most plastic power is wrought upon by its materials, as much at least as it influences them. What gave the cast and complexion to the fictions of a Scott or a Byron, but the elements out of which, and the mind by which they brought their works into being? So in every case. The age makes the poet, while the poet influences the age. It has been advanced even by grave divines, that the Creator himself was not free from the operation of this law; and that the evil which is in the world, is to be referred to the ruggedness of the materials out of which God made man. Certainly, it is a law of Providence. It is a law of universal being, physical as well as moral. It is simply the law of cause and effect; the law which says, that the effect resembles the cause. If, then, Jesus was the invention of Jews, he would himself have been a Jew, and not as he is, a man; his benevolence would have been Jewish, and not as it is, universal. You would have seen in him, the Messiah of Jewish expectations, not the Saviour of the world. The littleness of mean and ignorant men would have been upon him, not the large and full impress of the God of love.

If from the object we turn for a moment to the actions

and words of Christ, the views I have advanced will find corroboration.

He lived to complete the object for which he came. Benevolence with Jesus was not a fine theory taken up by an overheated imagination, and laid aside as soon as time had cooled its fervours down. It was a living principle, an actuating principle. It was the master-spring of his soul. Benevolence with Jesus was not interrupted in its action by the caprices of temper, the irruption of selfishness, the fluctuation of animal spirits. It was constant as well as powerful in its promptings. It shone on like the sun, in cloud and in sunshine, in summer and winter alike. Nor were there any sacrifices which it declined. It led the Saviour up and down the land of Judea through much trial, much labour, ceaseless persecution, with scarcely any human aid, prompting him to keep right on amid all difficulties, till his work was completed. And during these journeys of love what was his aim? not to court the great; not to offer incense on the shrine of Mammon; not to win the many by pandering to their prejudices; but to heal the sick, comfort the mourner, reprove the hypocrite, win the sinner; to enlighten the mind, regenerate the heart; to point out and lead the way to happiness and heaven. Not a principle hostile to human happiness, but meets with condemnation from his lips; all religious bigotry and pride; all national antipathies; all narrow views of God and man. And not a principle friendly to human happiness, but has his word of commendation; the love of kindred and kind; the love of country; the love of God; the love of duty; of goodness under every form. Love through all his actions ran. He was love personified. The force of truth has compelled even Paine to say—"the great trait in his character is philanthropy."

No adduction of instances can give an adequate idea of the benevolence of Jesus. To feel it in all its force, you must follow him through the pages of the New Testament, as he goes about on his merciful errand. To refer, however, to a few cases of its exercise. How benevolent is the spirit of most of his parables; especially that of the good Samaritan, and that of the prodigal son. In the first, the important principles are enforced, that the needy have claims on the affluent; that true religion consists in doing good; that national animosities should give way before the sense of man's universal brotherhood. In the



second, that there is but one family, and one Father; that the common Father cares alike for all his children, yearns most for those who have proved themselves prodigals; waits to be gracious to them, and welcomes the earliest tokens of their return. Repeatedly in the teachings of Jesus, are these great principles advanced. The language, the occasion, the imagery, may vary—the spirit is the same. Had Jesus left behind him, but one of the truths he taught, I mean the paternity of God; had he left but this one truth accompanied with the illustrations of it, which his teachings and life afforded, he would have done more than all other teachers for the cause of benevolence in the world. The paternity of God, and the brotherhood of man, and the duty of philanthropy, are all related truths: the two last ensue from the first, and in their joint operation they bind together heaven and earth by the cords of love.

I would also have you call to mind, how eagerly crowds attended on his footsteps, and listeners hung on his words; how tender his emotions were towards the hungry and fainting, and ignorant many; with what deep and reverential attachment he was regarded by his more intimate friends—by him whom he loved; and the disciple who lay on his bosom; by that small but heroic band of females who clung to him with characteristic fidelity through the darkest hours of his life, and would not be separated from him even by death. Think too of the welcome and the embrace he gave to little children; the distressful scene at the tomb of Lazarus; of his lamentation over the devoted city, and over his countrywomen involved in its approaching ruin; think of the care he took to comfort his disciples on the eve of his separation from them; and think of all the sorrow, indignity, and torture, through which he went; and all in the spirit of the mildest, tenderest benevolence, from the hour of his apprehension, to the time when he breathed forth his soul on the top of Calvary. Amazing love was that of Christ, for it grew fuller and more tender, when, towards the latter part of his life, his trials and pains were multiplied. Amazing love, which expressed itself in his dying moments, by a prayer on behalf of his cruel tormentors! Thus Jesus died as he lived, the Apostle of benevolence; exemplifying under the most disadvantageous circumstances, the teachings of his life, and drawing even from the lips of a heathen soldier the unwilling testimony, truly “this was a righteous man.”

Nor has the benevolence of Jesus been inoperative in the world. His life and death were the commencement of a new era. They introduced a new principle into society, and illustrations of the existence and energy of that principle may be seen, not merely in the devotedness of a Howard, the disinterestedness of a Priestley; not merely in the divine spirit of the Missionary enterprise, nor the institutions of mercy which adorn our cities, and are scattered over the country; not merely in schools, infirmaries, in public charities of all descriptions, but in the numberless streams of benevolence that start forth from the private abodes of our land, to water its barren places; in individual beneficence; in the kind look and warm grasp that greet the once despised, and wherever the spirit of Christ is not, the still despised poor; in the Sunday teacher's toil, and the good man's efforts to save the sinful. Yet, notwithstanding the impregnation with benevolence, which Christianity has effected in the hearts of all who love it; how great is the contrast between the benevolence of the best Christian, and that of Christ! The contrast is felt and deplored by every true disciple; and in that contrast, and in the efforts by which he has acquired what portion of benevolence he possesses, and the difficulties which impede his progress, and the distance which he feels will ever remain between him and his pattern; in these things he sees the transcendency of the worth of Jesus, and feels that nothing but the special agency of the Fountain of goodness could have made Jesus what he was. What is so high above the reach of human faculties, must have come down from heaven.

G. C. S.

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*The Detector.*—No. 12.

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“If there's a hole in a' your coats,  
I rede ye tent it;  
A chiel's amang ye takin' notes,  
And, mind, he'll prent it.”—*Burns.*

“Oh, an you talk o' conscience, I must have mine eye upon you.”—*Shakspeare.*

THE die is cast. The Church Establishments of Great Britain and Ireland—will fall. Their final prostration before the power of Christian liberty and truth, cannot be doubted by any one who practically believes in the prophecies of Scripture, and is a faithful disciple of the gospel

of Jesus. Not more certain is it that the Scriptures predict the rise of an antichristian authority, usurping the office and the dominion of Christ, than that those Scriptures foretell the doom of all that is opposed to that kingdom of righteousness, freedom, purity, and peace, of which Jesus is the divinely constituted head. That Establishments which acknowledge as their head a pope or a king, bow to an authority other than that of Jesus, it surely requires no argument to demonstrate. Worldly power, not content with civil rule, wields also the spiritual sceptre, and the dictates of an earthly sovereign, are obeyed in preference and often in opposition to the commandments of Christ. The declaration of Jesus, "My kingdom is not of this world," is falsified wherever his religion is chained to the chariot-wheels of the State. "He who sits in the temple of God showing himself to be God," by making nonconformity to his behests a crime, breathes another spirit and utters another language than that of the Anointed of Heaven. If it be antichristian in individuals thus to be "Lords over God's heritage," the crime is not lessened in being shared with numbers. The calling an antichristian power a "General Assembly," does not alter the fact of usurpation, any more than the Royal Commissioner presiding in silence over that Assembly, proves that the king is not in truth the head of the Church of Scotland. The constituting subscription to the Confession of Faith the "pick-lock to a place," is surely as irrational and despotic, as signing the Thirty-nine Articles, or the Mass-Book for the same purpose. Calvin is no better guide than Athanasius, and both are worthless when compared with the Saviour. To deprive individuals of unspotted character, of their good name, to cast them forth on a wide world to seek their bread, branded with heresy, because they prefer the Bible to a Catechism, and the Apostles to a Presbytery, is not a whit different in principle or in spirit, from that which led to the deeds of Convocations and lawn-sleeved Episcopacy, or to the enormities of Inquisitions. They are of one family. The union of Church and State produced them. To force a shilling from any one in support of that which his conscience condemns, is as iniquitous in principle as to take a pound. The difference is one only of figures. To tax the fish at Leith for the support of the Kirk of Scotland, is as bad as to tithe corn in Kent, or potatoes in Ireland

for the support of "black Prelacy," as Dr. Chalmers once denominated it. To believe that such enormities could continue to exist, and the purposes of Christianity be fully accomplished, would be as reasonable as to maintain, that Gentile pollution could coexist with Christian purity, and God be honoured whilst man was debased. "Christ must reign till he hath put *all enemies* under his feet."

Though, therefore, to him who has thoroughly studied the doctrines and precepts of Jesus, and drank deeply into that spirit of freedom and benevolence which are the characteristics of the New Covenant, the final demolition of every thing adverse or alien to the authority of Christ, must be a component and cherished part of his belief; yet the "signs of the times" seem to show the fall of the Church Establishments of these kingdoms, to be more near than a few years since could reasonably have been anticipated. Those Establishments have been attacked both theoretically and practically. Their irrational, unjust, and antichristian nature, has been unanswerably exposed, and opposition to their exactions has proceeded from words to deeds.

The Society of Friends, to their honour be it spoken, have always, as consistent non-conformists, manifested both the theory and the practice of Dissent. They protested against the interference of the Civil Magistrate in matters of religion; they would not sanction that interference, by voluntarily giving their money to support it. Their goods were seized to uphold a religion of peace, and their "sufferings" annually have been a passive resistance to what they deemed an abomination. The example has been followed in Edinburgh lately, in relation to the "only true Kirk," as that of Scotland vaunts herself, where a heavy taxation forces a *portion* of the people to aid an Establishment from which they dissent. In some parts of England, similar resistance has been exhibited. The more easily excited sons of Ireland, not content with a passive refusal of tithe, have proceeded to more active measures, and the constable not being able to support the *National Church*, the bayonet has been called in to lend its aid. There the edifying exhibition may be seen, of a Church revelling in wealth, though surrounded by a starving people, murder stalking over the land to revenge the imposition and exactions of a hated and hateful hierarchy; and the "pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war," arrayed in de-

fence of a system acknowledged to be indefensible. Truly "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

Such proceedings, however, "cast their shadows before," and foretell of dissolution. Political economists inquire, whether it be worth while to pay *two hundred thousand pounds* a-year for each of the thirty-nine articles, and the Athanasian creed to boot. Plans of Church reform are proposed by Lords; and the labourer as he toils for hours a-day to swell the wealth of a bloated hierarchy, utters also the cry for reformation. The clergy themselves, beholding the gathering storm, are meeting in various places, admitting the existence of "abuses" in their Church, and uniting in the call for timely reform, that the venerable fabric may yet be spared. The Archbishop of Canterbury acknowledges, that every effort must be made "in repairing the decays, removing the blemishes, and increasing the efficiency of our venerable Establishment." Nor are the people, whether Churchmen or Dissenters, idle lookers-on at the approaching conflict. At public meetings, resolutions have unanimously passed, denouncing tithes as "a fraud and a usurpation." To secure the support of the Electors in numerous places, the Candidates have pledged themselves to support measures for dissolving the connection between Church and State. The old warwhoop of bigotry, "Church and King," is no longer heard. In Wales, a meeting of upwards of one hundred Ministers, and many thousand Dissenters of all denominations, has been held at Caermarthen, whose resolutions breathe a spirit worthy of those venerated forefathers, who tenanted the caves and dens of the earth, rather than dwell in the palaces of Babylon—rather than submit an hour to her usurpations. And though last, not least, voluntary Church Associations are forming in Scotland, the dissemination and practical adoption of whose principles, must seal the fate of every establishment, upheld by forced contributions and legislative enactment. May they fall, and that speedily.

The fundamental principles of the Edinburgh Voluntary Church Association, are admirably stated. Who can gainsay them? Constantly should they be borne in mind, by every freedman of Christ Jesus. They are these: "That a compulsory support of religious institutions, is inconsistent with the nature of religion, the spirit of the Gospel, the express appointments of Jesus Christ, and the civil rights

of men; that, in every case where the individual disapproves of the system supported, or of the principle of its support, it is an unwarrantable attack on the right of property, and a direct invasion of the rights of conscience; that it keeps in a state of unnatural separation, those who ought to be united—and in a state of unnatural union, those who ought to be separated; that its tendency, as exhibited in its effects, is to secularize religion, promote hypocrisy, perpetuate error, produce infidelity, destroy the unity and purity of the Church, and disturb the peace and order of civil society; that, by its direct and indirect influence, it is among the principal causes of the low state of Christianity in those countries where it is professed, and of the slowness of its progress throughout the world; and that while thus unreasonable, impolitic, unjust, and mischievous, it has not even the plea of necessity. Christianity having within itself, in the native influence of its doctrines on the minds of those who believe them, every thing which is requisite for its efficient support, and indefinite extension."

Who shall stay the dissemination and practical realization of these principles? Not the people; they are *not with* these Establishments, but *against* them.—Not Associations, though composed of "clerical and laic" members of the Established Church: they may resolve and re-resolve; but their admissions of the necessity of "ecclesiastical reform," will far outweigh their assertions, that the Church property "ought not to be alienated to any other purpose." That property, or that Church cannot be saved, by adding to the number of the Bishops, or by building new churches. There must be a more root and branch reform than that.—Not Dr. Chalmers by his sounding sentences, or oracular anathemas in the pages of the *Quarterly Review*: "If," are his words of lamentation, "if the Ecclesiastical Establishments of our land, shall be of the number which are destined to fall, and that because the temporalities which belong to them, have been pronounced by the oracles of our day, as an oppression and a burden on the general population, then, instead of truth being their judge or executioner, they shall have fallen in the midst of strong delusion, at the mandate and by the authority of a lie." Dr. Chalmers is unfortunate in his allusions. We have read in the Scripture, that "God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie,"

2 Thess. ii. 11. But the words are there applied to the *corrupters* of Christianity, and not to those who uphold its purity—to the advocates of *human authority* in religion, and not to those who stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free. If Political Economy can instruct Dr. Chalmers no better, than that nine millions of money wrung from a suffering people, is for their *benefit* not their injury, he had better devote himself more strictly to that subject of which he has been appointed PROFESSOR. Divinity, *Scripture* divinity, will teach him better, and purer, and truer things.—Not he of West Kent notoriety, who, adjures the people to adhere to that Establishment at whose altar he ministers; and endeavours to secure their adherence by such raving as the following:—"You will not suffer those Temples where you received the Christian name, to fall an easy prey to sacrilegious plunderers; you will not let that dust which covers the ashes of your parents, be made the filthy track of Jacobinical hyænas!"—Not the poetical Editor of the Glasgow Courier, who in noticing the formation of the Glasgow Voluntary Church Association, remarks, "In their unholy attack against the Church, the Dissenters will no doubt be aided and cheered on by the infidelity of the country; by Papists, Unitarians, and other sects, who have renounced true Christianity in their hearts, and goaded on by ambition and cupidity, are ready to embark in any enterprise which holds forth the prospect of destruction and spoliation!" These assertions are on a par with those of him of Kent—both are illustrative of the spirit which Church Establishments engender, and both are answered by the following anecdote given in a speech at the meeting of Dissenters at Caermarthen, before noticed;—

"I am here reminded," said the Rev. Mr. Morgan, "of a short dialogue that took place a little time ago between one of the first gentlemen, and certainly one of the first magistrates in this county, and myself. Coming into a room where two other gentlemen and myself were on an electioneering chat, he accosted me thus, 'Well, Morgan, I know you are a Reformer.' 'I am, sir.' 'And so am I.' 'I am very glad to hear it, sir, and I hope you will prove your assertion.' 'Do not be surprised if I am a greater Reformer than you are.' 'I am afraid, then, you go too far, sir, for I wish every reform that is necessary.' 'Do you wish the entire abolition of tithes?' 'I do, sir.' 'Well,

give me your hand, Morgan, and so do I; and I will tell you farther, that I wish all the revenue that may arise from the sale of tithe, to be applied indiscriminately to the ministers of all denominations, for I hate the name of Churchman as I do the name of Dissenter; let us all be called by the name of the Church of Christ; and what do you think of that, Morgan?' 'I certainly, sir, cannot but admire the principles, which could have dictated these liberally expressed sentiments; but you have outstepped the bounds I had marked out for myself, and I would, by permission, propose as an amendment, that all the available revenue of the Church should be applied towards the liquidation of the national debt, thereby ridding ourselves at once of about two hundred millions; and what a fine thing that would be, sir. But as for the Dissenters to accept any share of it, I think I can answer for them, that no consideration on earth could induce them to accept the offer. They wish to adhere to the principles of the first Christian ministers—to accept only of the free-will offerings of their Congregations.'

Who, then, shall stay the dissemination and practical realization of these principles? The House of Lords? It may erect itself into the stronghold and defence of spiritual, as it did of civil corruption. Its mitred defenders are there, in their "pride of place;" and they are prepared to yield nothing to "popular clamour." The aristocratic caste are so wedded to corruption, and the Church affords such easy methods of portioning off its younger branches, that hereditary wisdom will uplift its voice in behalf of things as they are, and rally round "the altar and the throne." But its wisdom was changed into imbecility, when the dread voice of awakened millions demanded the recognition of political rights. Even the Episcopal bench quailed before its mandate. Auspicious omen for the emancipation of the religion of Christ from earthly bondage!

As a last resort, there will be the coronation oath pleaded for the continuance of misrule—"the conscience of the king"—religious scruples, combined to oppose the progress of religious purity, and the practical observance of the commandments of Christ. But delusive is that plea. It was urged against the repeal of those Test and Corporation Acts, which barred the Dissenter from social rights, by branding him as a heretic to the religion of his country. It was urged to stop the emancipation of the



Catholics from the power of laws as iniquitous as they were antichristian. But Catholic emancipation was granted, and Test and Corporation Acts were repealed, notwithstanding. The coronation oath! Why is it taken? Is it not a form by which the sovereign pledges himself to maintain and to promote the welfare and happiness, the rights and privileges of the people? What is government? A complicated apparatus to ensure wealth and splendour to the governor, regardless of what becomes of the governed? Or is it a sacred stewardship entrusted to responsible agents, in order that they may watch over, protect, and advance the welfare and happiness of the people who created it? The first is tyranny, the latter freedom. If grants were made in ages of darkness, which operate *now* as a hindrance to improvement—if privileges were then bestowed which at present benefit the few, to the injury of the many—if Establishments were in bygone days founded, which in those ages included within their pale the mass of the people, but to which in these days a vast majority of the inhabitants of the land do not belong,—the object of all righteous government would be defeated, the coronation oath would be falsified, were such Establishments, or privileges, or grants, not at once to be abrogated.

That a vast majority of the people of Great Britain and Ireland are dissenters from the Established Churches, cannot be denied. In England and Scotland, it is a rapidly increasing class; in Ireland, it is seven millions—to five hundred thousand. Every principle of freedom, justice, and Christianity, cries out against the longer continuance of a system like this, a system which enables the few to batten on the miseries of their country, which converts the religion of Jesus into the pander to corruption and misgovernment, and makes him who should be the minister of glad tidings of great joy to all, the rapacious tyrant instead of the friend and brother of the people.

In the midst of this annunciation and vindication of rational and generous and Scriptural principles, it is with pain we notice the alloy of an exclusive and intolerant spirit mingling in the societies north of the Tweed. In Church Establishments, the spirit of bigotry and anathema is not wonderful; it forms part and parcel of their institution. It is the encouragement of that spirit which constitutes a portion of their crime against society. But the

free spirit of Dissent should know nothing of the contamination. Wherever or by whomsoever manifested, proof is given that the parties know not the genuine nature of the principles of liberty they advocate. It is not the spirit of Christ. The third rule of the Edinburgh Society enacts, that it "shall consist of persons of all the denominations *usually called Evangelical*." Usually called! By whom? Where? The term changes its meaning in different latitudes. The "*Evangelical* Missionary Society" of Massachusetts is Unitarian. *Here* the name is synonymous with Calvinism, and the object is to exclude the Unitarian. The Glasgow Society goes farther still. Its third rule declares, it "shall consist of the friends of *voluntary* churches, *holding Evangelical* sentiments." And who is to judge? Is the Voluntary Church committee, a "heart-probing" one also? The rule cannot secure uniformity of opinion, though it may exclude the Unitarian. There is diversity of religious doctrine even in their Committee. There is one individual, at least, whom the Edinburgh rule might have shielded by its phrase "*usually called*," but whom the Glasgow rule would exclude, if "*holding evangelical sentiments*" is to be interpreted according to Scottish parlance; but he is a minister, and passes muster accordingly!

We have thought it our duty to condemn this petty exhibition of sectarian bigotry, this inconsistency between the principles of Dissent and the practice of Dissenters, this aping of the odious spirit of the Establishments against which they associate. Let not, however, *all* the members of those Associations be involved in the condemnation. There are individuals belonging to them who are as much opposed to this bigotry as ourselves. Nay, even in the Provisional Committee, advocates of perfect religious freedom were to be found. The matter was contested there. A proposition was made in that Provisional Committee, for a Rule which would have included as members of the Association, every denomination, every individual opposed to Church Establishments, whether that opposition sprung from religious or political considerations. But bigotry was alarmed. "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." To associate with "Socinians!" Impossible! And bigotry carried the day.

Notwithstanding these exclusive rules, and the kindred spirit manifested by some of the speakers, we rejoice in

the formation of the Associations. Let them labour in disseminating the genuine principles of dissent, of Christian freedom; and exclusion and bigotry, as well as the Establishments from which the infection was caught, must give way. Pure and undefiled religion will flourish in their stead, and then will there be peace on earth, good will to men, and glory to God in the highest.

ARGUS.

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*An Address to the Labouring Classes of Great Britain,  
on their Moral, Domestic, and Political Importance.  
By the Rev. J. R. Beard.*

(Concluded from p. 151.)

To contemplate your character in another point of view—You are a father, the master of a family, who are dependent on you, and without you perhaps utterly destitute. A female, in those days when hope and imagination drew out a prospect in bright and enchanting colours, entrusted her happiness in your hands, relying on your assurances and fidelity. Her little ones and yours are around her, and from her and you are to receive every influence that will affect their character and their happiness. Their young hearts are yet unsullied by vice, and the tear that has dimmed their eye a quick coming smile has driven away. How happy and joyful do they live, how fondly do they crowd around you when you return from your labour, and with what gay and innocent prattle do they tell you all their little news! Whether or not their bright morning shall be followed by a day of darkness, who but you will determine? Oh! can you think without pain of their becoming wretched in becoming vicious? How much more acceptable the thought, that they will grow up to be a comfort to yourself and her that fed them at her breast; and when your day of labour is past, and the darkness of age comes upon you, to pay the debt they owe you, in aiding you to procure a subsistence, and smoothing, by kind attentions, the rough road you will have to tread. Look at your family, and learn the importance of the station you hold. Their happiness—your own happiness—both depend on yourself. And of what consists the bulk of society but of families like yours? On parents, therefore, depends the happiness of the community. You have to answer the question—Shall this land be a land of peace or wretchedness? Shall its people have or not bread to eat, and comfortable abodes and clothing? Shall they be instructed or ignorant, virtuous or vicious, an honour or a disgrace to themselves and their country? And that,

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not in one, but through many generations. Vice and virtue pass alike from age to age as from man to man. The father bequeaths—if he leaves nothing else—his character to his offspring: he bequeaths them more—the consequences of his own evil courses, in weak and puny frames, disordered and depraved minds, in the wretchedness of poverty, perhaps of crime. And so from father to son does the poisoned current flow through many generations, bearing in its ever swelling and widening waters, moral ruin through many a breast and many a home. It is in the power of no mortal to tell the amount of misery thus occasioned. What strife and broils, what want and despair in the family, and in each individual what trouble, sorrow, fear, grief, rage! And then in eternity—but the scene is too horrible to contemplate: I pass it by in awe. But what an amount of happiness is thus thrown away, as well as misery created! The natural workings of the human frame, the Deity has filled with gratification. Not a motive, not a feeling but gives pleasure. Happiness is wrought into the very texture of our bodies; and to be, to live, to see, to hear, to feel, is to be happy. There is a happiness pervading all the frame in the mere feeling of existence, in the generous and full flow of life which health and exercise produce; there is a happiness in looking on the earth, and traversing its surface, and watching the play of its peaceful though irrational inhabitants; there is a happiness that cometh down from heaven to the mind that dwells on its gorgeous pageantry; there is a happiness, a full, rich, ceaseless happiness, in the intercourses of a virtuous home, in the comfort of one's partner, and the joy of one's children, and the prospects and hopes they afford: and all this is thrown away by the vicious. Look, then, my friends and brethren, look on this picture and on that—on one side is blessing, on the other cursing—in your own bosoms, your own homes, the homes of your children and their children, in your neighbourhood and your country. They both—blessing and cursing—with all their endless and mighty consequences, depend, parents, on you. This is a measure—this blessing or cursing—of the importance of your character, your station, your conduct. Oh! rise to a proper conception of the consequences of your actions, of your dignity if virtuous, of your degradation if vicious.

Finally. You are a *citizen*, and you claim to exercise all the rights of a citizen. Let your claim be granted, and let

vice degrade your character, and you will be a curse to your country. Important as are the acts of the legislature, your own character, in a national point of view, is more important still. A virtuous people will not long have a vicious government, and a vicious people will speedily vitiate the best government, and render the best laws and institutions not only useless but baneful. You are, I fear, too much given to look to your governors—not to yourselves—for political reforms. I do not deny that the government may and ought to do much; but I assert, that if they are to do good permanently, the bulk of the people must be good. Reform yourselves, and eventually you will reform the body politic. A corrupt government could not subsist among a virtuous people. A regeneration would be forced on them by the swelling and ascending waves of popular virtue.

The vicious citizen is, by his immorality, prepared to be the tool of the demagogue or the tyrant. He is ready to serve the master that will pay his services best, and, provided his selfish and foul passions can be gratified, he cares not whether he is made to contribute to the injury or the improvement of his country. Nay, as there is in men a love to sin, if it secure popular applause, he would rather, perhaps, be an instrument of evil than of good. Virtue is the only sure guarantee for the beneficial exercise of any political right. Rank, riches, and education, have each been deemed (and especially the first two) qualifications for the possession of power in the commonwealth, but, in reality, they are good, mainly, not to say exclusively, so far as they are *tokens and pledges of a virtuous character*. Be virtuous, and you are fit, however poor and humble, for the exercise of political power. This virtue will give you an interest in what is good—good government—good laws—good governors. You will have a sympathy with, and an attachment to what is good; and from what is bad, that is, from what is corrupt, injurious to your fellow men, you will turn away in the alienation of your heart, or oppose, with the energy and indignation which virtue inspires, and can so well support. I do not deny that knowledge and mental cultivation are valuable aids; but I know that they have been made the instruments of the designing—the levers by which political adventurers have raised themselves to eminence, by deluding the many, and pandering to the few. But virtue can, designedly, do no act

injurious to the state, and will spurn no efforts to learn, as well as to do, what is right. Virtue guarantees industry to acquire, as well as integrity to use knowledge, and, in respect to the great interests of society, will not fail to acquire information sufficient to come to a conclusion not essentially wrong. No, my friends, those who have presided over the destinies of these kingdoms, did not want knowledge and mental cultivation: they wanted political honesty. Their power of mind made their dishonesty our bane—without it, they might have desired, but could not, to any thing like the extent they did, have spread and battened in corruption. And, now, what can restore the strength and soundness of the frame of society? I answer, a moral regeneration. Honesty—virtue—must begin, and hold its way from the highest to the lowest, and from the lowest to the highest. Let the character of the nation be reformed, and its institutions will not be long corrupt. Happy the class who begin this desirable change, who carry it forward to completion. A high reward awaits them in the increase of their own happiness—in the multiplied comforts of a nation—in the salvation of a people from moral degradation and political misrule. Let the people be the first to move. The whole mass of society, forced up by the elevation of its base, will soon share in the moral elevation, and you, my friends, humble as you may be thought, will be the saviours of the nation.

The time has come when you begin to have some notion of your weight in the social scale. The events of the last fifty years have taught you, that power resides mainly with the people. You have seen them become the arbiters of the destinies of nations—cast down thrones which ages had settled and consecrated—change the whole surface and substance of societies—create new forms of government and modes of life as quickly as the passage of successive years. In your own land your voice has made itself to be heard in halls, which a century since were closed and sealed against the popular will—has stayed the hand of tyranny and the torrent of corruption—has made the hearts of the great misgive them, and given to the political machine a bias, by which it is beginning to favour the interest, not as heretofore, of the privileged few, but of the despised many. You have made your claims known, and rights are granted which will double your power. The position of the people, at the present moment, is in itself,

and in the prospects it holds out, full of interest and hope. It promises, not merely a political regeneration, but, in the gain and the exercise of long withheld rights, a moral regeneration also. Men will learn to feel their dignity in feeling their power, and, conscious of their social importance, will be careful of their characters. The possession of unrestrained power is a curse; equally so the loss of all social consequence. The one makes a tyrant, the other a slave. But the exercise of power, in which many concur, in which excess is prevented by competition, and ambition fostered by the hope and the ability of rising in the social scale, encourages the action of the mind, and brings forth the fruits of moral excellence. But this is true only where there is a basis of virtue in the character, on which to erect the edifice of political and moral worth. The soil must be good, or the best seed will perish. Every thing depends on the state of his mind and heart, to whom power is entrusted. Is it good? it will speedily become better by the very trust committed to him. Is it bad? what might have been a blessing to the individual and many of his fellow citizens, will be converted into an instrument of evil to himself and all over whom he has an influence. The possession of political influence, then, is really desirable, only to those who are of good character. To none but these can it prove beneficial, and none but these can use it to a beneficial end. But, with the influence which they now have, and which they are daily augmenting, the people of this land may, provided they love and pursue virtue, work out a good, to be measured only by the happiness of myriads in the present and successive generations. What a weight of importance depends in the use you make of your power. You have in your hands the destiny of millions. Your conduct will determine the question—Shall the hopes which the benevolent and patriotic are now forming perish, or be realized?—shall the bright prospects that appear in the distance before us, vanish as an unsubstantial vision?—shall misery, perhaps anarchy and slaughter, stalk through the land, or righteousness and peace run down in streams?—shall every succeeding generation, the child and the sire unborn, rise up and call you—my friends and brethren of the people—call you blessed? Never, perhaps, was a more awfully important question proposed to an artizan to answer—never interests of greater consequence at issue—never a crisis



involving more calamity or blessedness than the present. In the fate of the present extension of civil power, and the conduct of the people of this kingdom, is bound up the fate of liberty and good government all over the world, and pre-eminently throughout Europe. Use your influence for good, and the cause of liberty will be as triumphant as it is righteous—for evil, and you will bring plagues worse than those of Egypt on yourselves, your children, your posterity, and blight the prospects and paralyze the arm of many a patriot in foreign lands.

Well, then, may you feel the dignity of the mission you have to fulfil. As men, as parents, as citizens, you have in your hands more influence than would possess the kings of the earth banded together in holiest alliance. For them, they could do little more than register the will and follow the leading of virtuous myriads; whereas, be what your weight in the social scale requires, be diligent to do your duty as men, as parents, as citizens, and, instead of becoming, as must the vicious, the slaves and tools of the few, you will shape their course, impel them to good though they mean evil, give effect to the good they intend, and work out a good of your own, of more worth because your own act, and more extensive, because, with yourselves, pervading the mass of society, and going into the majority of families throughout the land.

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### *On the Moral Constitution and History of Man.*

(Chapter XII. concluded from p. 157.)

A THIRD objection to our general doctrine, is, that some of the precepts are absolutely impracticable: such as, “give to every one that asketh”—“to him that smiteth thee on the right cheek, turn unto him the left one also”—“if any man sue thee at law for thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.” If a man, says the objector, should act upon such rules, he would be infallibly ruined or murdered on many occasions.

In reply, I would say, expressions that are obviously proverbial or metaphorical, must not be strained to the extreme of a literal interpretation. Still I admit the inference, that there would be danger of such consequences from the doctrine as the world is, or as it has been. But we must observe, that our Lord lays down these precepts

and others in general, as rules by which *his kingdom* was to be governed—not the world; and when mankind in *general*, or even the *majority* of society, shall become convinced of the duty and advantage of becoming his subjects, it will be easy for every individual to act in the spirit of such precepts, or perhaps to the very letter of them—*because*, when all are actuated by the same generous and peaceful temper, nobody would give or yield more on the one hand, than he would or might get on the other, when occasion required. Society, at such a period, will be like a polite company assembled to dinner. Every one is ready to prefer another to the honours or delicacies of the table; and yet none suffer by this generosity. If there is any distinguished person in the company, he obtains voluntarily the respect due to him—if there is any humble individual, he is relieved from all degrading sense of inferiority, by the polite attention of those who are near him. Compare such a scene with a party of savages or brutes, where every one, intent on satisfying the cravings of his animal appetite, contends for what is best or most substantial—growl and curse at each other if disappointed—or haply, fall to blows, and overturn the whole material of the feast. All this difference results from that shadow of benevolence, *politeness*, in the first case; and that root of contention, *selfishness*, in the second. But, in the first case, the whole company must be polite, or at least the *majority*, in order to shame any rude spirit into decency. The impracticability complained of, therefore, does not lie in the nature of the thing abstractly, but in the existing state of society.

What then is the duty of individual Christians in such circumstances? Surely to do all they can—to infuse their principles into society—to act upon them for *themselves*, to the utmost verge of possibility—to make the precepts of their Master the *general rule*—the necessity of modifying them, *the exception*, or their *grief*, when such necessary exceptions are numerous. It is their duty to be constantly carrying *forward* society, to a higher pitch of improvement—infusing their leaven into the lump, until the whole be leavened, and *then* the necessity for exceptions, and their grief for them, will be at an end.

In the meantime, it would totally have defeated the design and object of our Saviour's doctrine, to have allowed or even hinted at any modification of his precepts.

If any given precept was found not to be practicable, owing to the state of the times, or the peculiar position of an individual, each person must adopt the necessary limitations upon his own responsibility, and at his own peril. This is allowed even under the common principles of morality. Thus, the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," is absolute and imperative; you cannot infer from its expression, that there can be any exception; you are not allowed to calculate before hand, and be prepared when and where you may dare to kill a fellow-creature with impunity; yet circumstances may occur in private self-defence, or in public warfare, where you are justified in killing. This involves, however, an awful responsibility, and the justification rests on the force of unavoidable and unpremeditated circumstances. Any previous calculation or design would imply *that malice* which defines murder, under whatever cloak it may be screened. For the same reasons, while it may be true, that certain precepts of Christianity are not practicable in *certain states of society*, and in *certain individual positions*, yet that is no reason for modifying them in their *doctrinal* enunciation. The causes of such modification are of a temporary, local, and individual nature. It is the duty of Christian societies and of Christian men, to strive constantly to escape from such circumstances; this has been rendered easier, and will continue to be made still more easy, by the constant progress of society towards a more improved condition.

If we were to adopt any modification, however reasonable it might appear at any *given time*, and make of it a new general rule or precept, it would tie down society to one particular stage of its progress; and unfortunately this has been done practically, although not avowedly. Many of the precepts of Christ have been set aside as *impracticable*, and certain lower standards adopted by a sort of tacit consent. We will speak of some of these specifically, on a future occasion; but I will illustrate my general remark for the present, by one example.

Let us take the case of Slavery. In the early ages of the world, after the patriarchal system was succeeded by extensive wars and by despotism, the great majority of mankind were reduced to a state of slavery. There is no question *now, and with us*, that this was an evil of the greatest magnitude, fatal for the time to every thing that is excellent and noble in man and in society. But

it was *impracticable* 1800 years ago, to have altered this state of society *on a sudden*. Christianity, in teaching the equality of all men by nature and in the sight of God, promulgated a principle capable and destined to destroy this monstrous institution; but even our Lord, all uncompromising as he was about his principles, did not enjoin on his disciples the immediate emancipation of their slaves. The thing was impracticable at that time, and yet we live to see it completely effected, at least in Europe. Now let us suppose, that some eminent philosophic Christian in early centuries—perhaps a Christian emperor or a pope—contemplating the spirit and tendency of the Christian religion on the subject of slavery, and at the same time the invincible obstacles opposed to the absolute emancipation of slaves, should have concerted a plan to have brought about a *compromise*, and obtained a modification of the system. Supposing such a system had obtained the sanction of law, of custom, and even the approbation of a universal public opinion in favour of what was at the time esteemed a reformation of morals, and a definitive settlement of the question,—after all, the *ultimate effect* would only have been to retard or to prevent the consummation we have lived to witness.

Such a thing precisely was done in India, by the institution of *castes*. There might not have been wanting, at the time of modelling such institutions, good reasons by which it could have been proved, that they were improvements in regard to the previous state of society, expedient under existing circumstances, and all that was practicable according to the views of human nature then entertained. But the evil was, that they arrested the progress of society, and doomed it to remain for ever in that particular stage. The experience of India for two or three thousand years, is proof of this; and there was not the least symptom of any change of the system, till the force of external circumstances, and the instructions or examples of Europeans, have begun to excite some idea of better things.

Let us compare with this, the progress of that principle once admitted and never denied among Christians, that all men were equal, and consequently should be free when circumstances would permit. This gradually produced a general feeling that it was a meritorious act, and the proper duty of Christians to approximate as nearly as

possible to the fulfilment of their Master's views on the subject—to improve the condition of their slaves in point of comfort and moral character, and occasionally to manumit them as a reward of their good behaviour—or, as the notion then prevailed, as an atonement for their master's own sins. The clergy especially, were active and exemplary in this matter. The fitness and duty of it appeared more and more obvious, as the practice became more common. Political revolutions and considerations came in aid of it, under the direction of divine Providence; till at length the doctrine and efforts of the Church were in this instance crowned with complete success.

The same success would attend similar persevering efforts with other precepts and doctrines of Christianity, which have been regarded as impracticable. But alas! we are like the Hindoos—we have come to a tacit compromise with the world, and with our selfish propensities—we have assumed a standard of moral and social perfectibility, far beneath the Christian standard, and we aim not beyond our own stunted mark. And there we are, and ever will remain, let us busy ourselves how much soever we may, about the means, and the forms, and the appendages of Christianity in other respects; unless we break through this supposed line of enchantment by which we are circumscribed—through this idea of moral impossibilities under which we are naturally so ready to hide our indolence and our selfishness. Where is the impossibility, for instance, of a rich man ceasing to lay up treasures on earth (as the Gospel commands), and to apply what he can well spare for the benefit of the poor, the ignorant, and the oppressed, in a measure far beyond what has been customary? What is to hinder him who hath once obtained a livelihood to be content, without overstraining his means, and engrossing his mind with plans for rising to a higher condition in the world? What prevents the poor from being patient and resigned with his lot—remembering, that it will only last for a season, and be compensated in heaven, if nothing favourable in the course of Providence occur in this life? It is the maddening rage and thirst for riches, which has seized all ranks of society—the open and shameless worship of mammon—the love of the world and its vanities, in opposition to the love of God our heavenly Father, and the things of his kingdom.

Let us not deceive ourselves; this, and such like things, form the moral *impracticability*—the insurmountable barrier. But wherefore impracticable? Who shall say, that a man *cannot* do such things if he *would*? This is not like expecting of him, that he should never be *surprised* by temptation, nor overcome by a sudden passion—that he should never be led away by the force of *circumstances*—nor be the dupe of a false opinion or prejudice. These are indeed the *unavoidable weaknesses* of human nature. From such causes, it may be impossible for a man to be perfectly *just* and temperate at all times; and if his conscience acknowledge the authority of any ceremonial religion, he may likewise find it to be impracticable to satisfy all its *punctilios*; but none of all these things are an excuse why he *cannot* observe the Christian precepts. The truth is, either that we *will not*, or that we have overlooked and forgotten the purport and end of Christianity, in our attention to, and zeal about the subordinate parts of it. Or rather both of those causes have had an influence. Our natural inclination and passions, being opposed in the first instance to the generous principles of Christianity; it is not enough that our understanding be convinced of their abstract excellence. We must be *regenerated* in the spirit of our minds, before we can practically and habitually act in conformity to them. But this is not an easy matter. It is comparatively an easy matter for a man to adopt some new opinions in theology; and in consequence of them, to become more serious, more attentive to the forms of religion, and even subject to religious feelings, of fear, joy, or gratitude, as he may imagine himself at the time to be the object of the divine displeasure or favour. But from being covetous to become liberal—from being vain to become modest—from being irascible and censorious to become patient and indulgent—to undergo a moral regeneration of this kind, is another affair, and requires indeed that true grace of God or divine influence of which many persons who prate much, do absolutely know nothing, while they do not bring forth the requisite fruits.

“But those things which appear impossible to man, are possible with God,” and the whole tenor of our Lord’s doctrine proceeds on the ground that “a man must be born again before he can enter into the kingdom of God.” The chance and the means, however, of this moral regeneration, are greatly impeded by certain false ideas con-

cerning the true end and purport of Christianity, and of what constitutes its most essential doctrines. We have endeavoured, in this past Part of our discussion, to elicit these, to show their superior importance, and in what respects they complete the moral education and character of man. In the Second Part of our argument, which is to follow, we will have to show, how the genuine doctrine of Christianity was corrupted and opposed by particular influences for a time, or by the substitution of other and inferior things in its place; and how, notwithstanding, it carried forward the slow, but progressive improvement of society,—in doing this, there will be farther opportunities afforded of proving and illustrating its character.

SALTICOTE, Jan. 1833.

W. B.

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### *On Uniformity of Causation.*

(Concluded from page 182.)

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I SHALL only adduce further, some instances in the earlier part of the Essay, which betray the double sense of the principal terms. In illustrating the necessary assumption of the Uniformity of Causation, the writer says to the supposed objector, who demands *logical* proof of the principle in question—"I naturally and irresistibly take it for granted. You yourself continually act on a similar assumption; for, in putting your questions to me, or any other person, you take for granted, you assume without thinking of it, that your words will reach the ears of him for whom they were intended, and excite ideas in his mind, as you have found them to do in time past. In placing your foot on the ground, in taking up your pen, or in eating your breakfast, you still expect that the objects around you, the subjects of your operation, will *retain their usual properties*; that the earth will not open a gulf beneath your feet, that the pen will not melt in your grasp, and that the food which has hitherto nourished you, will not turn to poison on your stomach. In a word, from the same causes, you and every other human being, necessarily anticipate the same effects. This uniformity is the essential principle of all expectation."—(p. 197.) But is there not, I ask, in all this, a *double* assumption? Besides the assumption of uniform sequence, is there not that of similar or continued antecedence? In the Author's own

words, we expect "that objects will retain their usual properties," and we irresistibly infer that since, or if they do so, the result will be the same as we have known it. But our expectation may be false, though the *fundamental principle* as it is called (that of uniformity of sequence) cannot be. A man may grow deaf, and words no longer reach his ears as formerly; he may lose his faculties, and words will no longer excite their customary ideas in his mind. We may find ourselves in a bog where we used to walk dry-shod; and one man's meat may (in vulgar proverb) be another man's poison. But then the causes are changed, and uniformity of sequence still obtains in the changed effects. Our expectation always implies the uniform sequence; but it specifically arises, from our knowledge or assumption of causes, as uniform or as altered. The prevailing and observed uniformity of causes (seen or inferred from uniform effects), gives to our expectations the degree of uniformity which they manifest; but this is altogether a distinct subject of consideration, not professedly included in the scope of the Essay, though strangely mingled with the illustration of the very simple principle, that the same causes have the same effects.

The very first and simplest illustration, exhibits the same transgression of the bounds of the definition. "When I throw a piece of paper into the fire, it is obvious that I do it under the impression that the paper will be consumed; because I have found by experience that fire has the property of consuming paper." (p. 196). By the principle of uniform sequence, I am only led to infer, that if fire and paper continue to have their existing properties, the same result will always take place. I also assume, (for reasons which it might not be difficult to explain—from experience all on one side, giving no support to any different notion,) that the properties of fire and paper will continue unchanged; and the two assumptions together lead to my expectation, that paper in the fire will always be consumed.

The same may be said of most of the illustrations offered in the early chapters of the Essay. They illustrate, it is true, the uniformity of *sequence*, but they illustrate also the uniformity of certain *causes*, and our habitual assumption of that uniformity; yet no distinct notice of this is made, and the whole illustration is stated to belong to the former principle.



The computations of the astronomer, by which the phenomena of the heavens are accurately foretold many centuries beforehand, and confidently described as having occurred in former times, are among the author's illustrations of our assumption of the uniformity of sequence. (See p. 203, 204.) But these, like the above mentioned, plainly proceed upon two distinct assumptions, *viz.* the uniformity of causes, and the uniformity of their sequences; the former of which appears to me the weightier assumption of the two. Let the astronomer assume, that the same causes produce the same effects; but let him doubt the identity of the causes, and his predictions would cease. Should his calculations of the future from the past ever deceive him, he would conclude either that some new cause had intervened, or that he is imperfectly acquainted with those which continually operate. That his calculations, and those of other astronomers, have been in an indefinite number of cases, for centuries of time, unerring, is his warrant for thinking that Nature's causes are unvarying; and that he is sufficiently acquainted with the laws of planetary motion. Hence his assumption of uniform causes; to this he joins the easy, the involuntary, if not the self-evident maxim, that the same causes produce the same effects; and he gives out his scientific prediction. How strange to cite this as a mere instance of the assumption of uniformity of sequence, and to maintain uniformity of sequence to be the fundamental principle of evidence! The predictions of the astronomer are afterwards (p. 221) declared to "proceed on the assumption, that the heavenly bodies *will continue to be governed by the same laws.*" Is this another phrase still for uniformity of sequence? Does this assumption of the *continuance of the same laws*, amount to no more than the conditional assumption, that if the causes be the same, the effects will be the same? or has the writer jumped from the artificial to the natural meaning of terms, and spoken of the uniformity of causes under the same phrases which his definition applied to the uniformity of their sequences? The author appeals to other metaphysicians, as having had a glimpse of the truth he is developing; his quotations, however, from Beattie, Brown, Reid, Stewart and Hume, on pages 205-209, refer obviously, I think, to our habitual assumption of the *uniformity of causes*, rather than the assumption of *uniformity of sequence*. That from Dr.

Brown, which follows (p. 210, 211), appears to me to be the only one properly illustrative of the fact "that we assume the uniform *operation* of causes." "The change," Dr. Brown says, "which we know in the actual circumstances observed, we believe to have taken place *as often as the circumstances before were similar*; and we believe also, that it will continue to take place *as often as future circumstances* shall in this respect have an *exact resemblance* to the present." This is strictly the belief in uniformity of sequence, or in the *operation* of causes; a conditional expectation of effects. But all the preceding quotations, are illustrative of the assumption of causes uniform in themselves, in their number and arrangement, as well as their *operation* or sequences.

The Author's illustrations in the Sixth Chapter, are open to the same remarks as many of the foregoing. They illustrate *both* the assumptions which enter into the calculation of the future from the past. They imply not only the hypothetical assumption, that *if* causes be the same, effects will be the same; but also the practical assumption (sometimes it may be correct, sometimes false), that causes *are* the same, and the effects *therefore* are to be expected. Having commented so much at large on other instances, I shall be satisfied merely to have pointed out these, requesting the reader to trace for himself, the ambiguities of expression and meaning which I have endeavoured to point out.

Apology must seem due to you, sir, for the length of these remarks. I did not purpose so tedious a performance when I began them. But criticism is apt to become as lengthy as its text, and reply may easily be longer than attack. I deem the subject one of extreme importance to the credit of Revelation, with men of intelligent minds, who, too much disposed to doubt because many believe absurdities, may be glad of an apparently new weapon to hurl against miracles. I think I have shown, however, that the assumption of uniformity of causation (as defined by the Essayist) does not bear upon the credibility of miracles at all; but that he has made it seem to do so, by abandoning his definition, and affixing a totally distinct meaning to the phrase. I cannot but express my utter surprise, that so gross a fallacy should have crept into the works of a writer so clear and precise in his general style of thought and expression. My difficulty in reading the book has been to persuade myself, that the fallacy really

is such as I have declared. It is so palpable, that I felt afraid to charge it on a writer of deserved repute. I read the Essay again and again, thinking to find myself mistaken in the impression. I weighed every possible meaning of the principal words. To those which were defined I kept the definition attached, and then found nothing practical, nothing bearing upon the grand point proved. A uniformity of *sequence*, where nothing was predicated respecting the nature of the *antecedents*, was absolutely inapplicable to evidence or expectation. Yet evidence and expectation were made fundamentally to depend upon the assumption of uniformity of causation or sequence. The instances alleged, proved to be illustrations of a different assumption; and ambiguity of meaning was therefore to be charged upon the Essayist. The mischief is, I repeat, in the *definition*, or in the terms used to denote the thing defined. When we get into the body of the Essay, we forget the arbitrary meaning assigned to common phrases. We slip into their common meaning, as the author did before us; and admit, while we perhaps wonder to find ourselves admitting, his conclusions. Or else we turn back to the definition, and find the conclusion a non-sequitur.

HULL

EDWARD HIGGINSON.

*Dr. Chalmers' Illustrations of Theology.*—No. 5.

THE most wordy are not always the most wise; the most fluent of speech are not invariably the most free in spirit; nor are the most figurative in expression at all times the most felicitous in execution. If any one hesitate to admit the truth of these positions, let him read Dr. Chalmers; and unless he take words for wisdom, and figures for facts, he will hesitate no longer. There, indeed, he will meet with words in deluging abundance, but too often without any thing like a wise application. There also he will find fluency of speech, hurrying on with the swiftness and the deafening noise of a cataract, but without that freedom of spirit which rises constantly above embarrassment, and still flings around it ideas that are clear. And there too, he will see figures crowd on figures, like the gaudy pageantries of a lengthy procession, but very frequently without any more real use than their mere display.

But this is not all. Dr. Chalmers very often allows

his abundance of words, fluency of utterance, and redundancy of figures, to lead him into most sad mistakes, and even palpable self-contradictions. He reminds one of an auctioneer, who, having to sell Dr. Johnson's works complete in a dozen large thick volumes, tells his auditors that these volumes are an invaluable treasury, a storehouse of learning, an inexhaustible fund of wit and knowledge, and an indispensable requisite for the library of every man of taste and sense and inquiry. But having disposed of this article, and now having to sell "the Beauties of Johnson," in two small volumes, he informs the company that here are all the beauties without any of the defects of Johnson; that the reader of these two small books will find himself possessed of all the valuable knowledge contained in Dr. Johnson's writings, without having waded through the whole of those ponderous works, and reading the useless as well as the useful.

And so of Dr. Chalmers. The article he has to dispose of, is set off to the best possible advantage, that words and figures can bestow upon it, although these words and figures may be in direct opposition to those which have been or may be employed in setting off to the best advantage some other disposable article. When, for instance, he is illustrating his doctrine of *human depravity*, then the *natural man* is pronounced quite unable to do a single good act, or think a single good thought; he is utterly powerless, and absolutely void of any faculty to receive and believe and obey the commands of God, given through Jesus Christ; and he must, in addition to the possession of reason and the Scriptures, be moved to goodness and a preparation for heaven, by a supernatural agency, or he will never be religious on earth, or happy beyond the grave. But when illustrating the responsibility and culpability of man, then man is declared to have reprobated himself by a voluntary act; for the exercise of thought and memory, would have caused gratitude to God to spring up in his bosom; and this gratitude produced by the voluntary exercise of the natural faculties, would have led to obedience and consequently religion.—When he is illustrating the mercy and love of God, then God "takes his own way of it," and steps forward to relieve us from the debt of sin under which we lay, by an act of gratuitous kindness. But when a particular unscriptural school-divinity notion about the "mighty contest of the

attributes," of the justice and truth and immutability of God, has to be illustrated, then God can neither take his own way of it, nor step forward to forgive sin by an act of gratuitous kindness; for another person distinct from God the Father, must "chase away the obstacles to the triumph of mercy," or the mighty contest between justice and mercy must continue without end, and for ever prevent the Father from taking any way whatever, of exercising mercy and love towards his erring creature man.—And although the illustration of a fanciful notion about faith and the spirit required a spiritual telescope; yet, when faith as the result of mental exercise, the only faith which any person can really possess, has to be illustrated, then it is neither supernatural nor something external to the individual, but something natural to him and in him, for it is just like the sight, or hearing, or any one of the senses. These are the Doctor's words:—

"In this respect, faith may bear a resemblance to sight, or hearing, or any other of the senses, by which man holds communication with the external things that are near him and around him. The same eye which when open, looks to a friend, and can from that very look afford entrance into the heart for an emotion of tenderness, will also behold other visible things, and take in an appropriate influence from each of them—will behold the prospect of beauty that is before it, and thence obtain gratification to the taste; or will behold the sportive felicity of animals, and thence obtain gratification to the benevolence; or will behold the precipice beneath, and thence obtain a warning of danger, or a direction of safety; or may behold a thousand different objects, and obtain a thousand different feelings and different intimations. Now the same of faith." —Sermons at the Tron Church, p. 505.

That is, in a few plain English words, faith is to the mind what the eye is to the body, just an organ for examining objects within its reach, and that can be brought under its investigation. Conformably with this, Dr. Chalmers says, that the man who has faith in Christ, "will look to Christ as an example," and he will "look to Christ as a teacher," for Christ "came to sanctify as well as save." And therefore, "the practical attitude of the believer" (i. e. one exercising faith), "is that of one who is ever looking forward;" "the practical movement of the believer, is that of one who is ever pressing forward." And

this must be unquestionably true, if faith be the eye of the mind, and a man be only responsible for seeing or not seeing with that eye such objects as are placed within the range and adapted to the nature of its vision. But if a man's faith or mental eye be required to see objects which are far beyond the limits, or contrary to the nature of his vision; or in other words, to look and press forward towards that of which he cannot, with the utmost stretching of the eye of faith, catch a view any more than the bodily eye can by any effort get a glimpse of the inhabitants of the planet Jupiter; then it can never become the practice of the believer, to look to that which he cannot see, and press towards that which is no object in his view.

And to affirm, that God will punish a man for not seeing that with the eye of faith, or in other words, believe that which he cannot possibly see or believe, is as opposed to reason as would be the assertion, that God will punish the blind for not seeing the light of the sun, or the deaf for not hearing the words of Christ; and it is as contrary to Scripture as it would be to maintain, that God is a hard master, reaping where he had not sown; and it is as base a libel against God, as it would be to assert that he is not good.

But as certainly as Dr. Chalmers is wrong, when he represents faith as something which can be obtained only in a supernatural manner; and yet a something for the non-possession of which, the unfortunate being who had it not, will be consigned to never-ending woe; so as undoubtedly is he right, when he represents faith as simply that which deals with evidence, just as the bodily eye does with external objects. Yes, this is most true; and therefore as the bodily eye, by the same sort of effort, and exactly in the same way as it takes in the features of a friend, also takes in those of a foe, or the lineaments of a beautiful prospect, and the form and situation of the dangerous precipice, and the appearances of thousands of other objects; so the eye of faith, by the same sort of effort, and in exactly the same way as it takes in the evidences of the existence of Julius Cæsar and the truths of general history, also takes in the evidences for the existence of Jesus Christ, the divinity of his mission, and the truths of Christianity; and in the same manner as it takes in the promises and prospects of the arts and sciences, does it receive the promises and prospects of religion. And as no other, and no different bodily eye is needed

for looking at one class of objects, than that which is required for viewing another; so no other, or even different mental eye or faith is necessary to enable a person to look upon, become influenced by, and act conformably with the Christian religion, than is requisite to enable him to look upon and become influenced by any other system, the truth of which is sustained by testimony.

This rational view of faith, which is found stated in the most unequivocal language, and illustrated in a great variety of ways, in a book called the New Testament, Dr. Chalmers might perhaps at all times have espoused and enforced, had it not, most unfortunately for his consistency so happened, that he had another and very dissimilar book, called the Confession of Faith, to recommend and dispose of. Then he tells the persons to whom he offers the Confession, that faith is like neither eye nor ear, nor any bodily or mental organ, for it is a special gift of God to the elect, conveyed supernaturally to the heart by the Holy Spirit; and as this book contains a full account of this curious kind of faith, and of election, effectual calling, adoption, final perseverance, and many other important matters either not treated of at all in the Bible, or only supposed to be referred to—this Confession of Faith is an indispensably necessary book for every one who desires to work himself into the fancy, that he has become possessed of that faith which it prescribes.

Now, this inconsistency comes of manacled sense and Scripture with the chains of metaphysical divinity, and then expecting them to move as gracefully as if they were unconfined. But religion fettered, and religion free, are as unlike in their power to do good, as the ice-bound fountain and the purling stream. But as the sun loosens the bands of the frozen spring, and sets its waters at liberty to flow over the land, and diffuse the blessings of fertilization as it flows on; so the spirit of free inquiry, which is daily increasing in strength and energy, is loosing the bands which confessions, and creeds, and church establishments, and worldly policy, have wound about the Christian religion; and ere long she will be emancipated from the iron thralldom of fifteen centuries, and bounding forth, with no sectarian habiliments encumbered, but adorned with her own pristine beauty and heavenly simplicity, uttering no hard sayings, harsh expressions, or cruel anathemas, but speaking her own native and uni-

versally intelligible language of love—she will take under her benevolent charge, the whole family of man. Then will she proclaim in a voice so loud that all the world will hear, and yet so sweet that every human ear will dwell with rapture on the accents of her lips,—“I am not from Calvin, but from Christ: I was not born in Scotland, in England, at Geneva, or at Rome, but in heaven: I am not the offspring of fancy or vain philosophy, but I am the daughter of God: I am not bringing my benefits and blessings to a few only who follow Luther, Knox, or Wesley, but to all in every nation who love God and work righteousness.”

H. C.

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*On the Importance of adhering to Acknowledged Principles in the Interpretation of the Scriptures.—No. 3.*

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WE have, in the two preceding Numbers, endeavoured to show the uniform consistency of the Scriptures, in maintaining the principles that God is strictly ONE, and the sole Creator of all things, whether in the natural or the moral universe; those passages which are alleged in support of the deity and creative agency of Christ, relating in reality to that perfect union of mind and will, which subsisted between him and the Almighty—to the blessings of immortality as conferred on his moral excellences—and to the extension of his righteous dominion over all other authorities, till at length it shall become absolute, and maintain an everlasting sway over all the children of men. With the oneness of God, are intimately connected his infinite perfections as the source of all knowledge, power, and moral excellence; and in the admission of this principle, in its full extent, I conceive that all who acknowledge the divine authority of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, will in general terms agree. The reason of this general concurrence is, not simply the many solemn, lucid, and fervent declarations concerning the divine rectitude, goodness, and mercy contained in those Scriptures, but because the dispensations which are there recorded, exhibit manifestations to the understandings of men, and impress their hearts with the conviction, that they must have proceeded from a God possessing these attributes. Their uniform and decided opposition to all idolatrous worship—to all that moral turpitude of which it was the prolific source, and which rendered sacred the most shame-



less and cruel enormities, and caused the persons and the affections of man, the noblest of God's creatures, to be prostrated before quadrupeds and reptiles, and even stocks and stones, the work of his own hands; the spirit of true wisdom, piety, and moral rectitude which breathes through the laws, the psalms, the lessons, the proverbs, the predictions of the sacred penmen, which lives in the lives of many of the distinguished characters, and more especially pervades the whole doctrine, miracles, conduct, and sufferings of him who is set forth as "the Saviour of the world;" and above all, the distinct and full assurance, which, after having been in part opened by preceding dispensations, is brought fully to light by his gospel, that "the dust" shall resume its vital energies, and that the very state of death shall ultimately be destroyed, and immortal life universally realized; all these by their combined influence produce an indelible impression upon the mind, that the divine author of the whole, the sacred fountain of this spirit of power, wisdom, rectitude and beneficence, must indeed be a God of infinite perfection.

The light of nature greatly conduces to promote this general impression upon men's minds, concerning the infinite power and perfections of the Creator and Disposer of the universe; but on the other hand, the most melancholy proofs are prevalent of the degeneracy and perversion of their views, arising from a departure from consistency in the maintenance of his acknowledged attributes. This all-perfect Being is represented as suffering one of his creatures to pervert the whole moral frame of man, and to reverse his state and destiny from the most excellent and happy, to the most depraved, and the most exquisitely miserable. For this state and destination, a practical remedy is assigned, as utterly at variance with all rational ideas of justice, as it is asserted to be indispensably required by it; while "the Father of mercies" is actually represented as being infinitely cruel and inexorable. This most extraordinary representation takes its rise from the views which have been adopted of the first formation and constitution of man; the causes of his first palpable breach of a divine command; the effect which this act is supposed to have produced upon his moral frame; and its inevitable consequences upon the offender himself, and upon his whole unborn posterity! Did the Scriptures really contain and inculcate such doctrines, concerning what is denomi-

noted "the fall of man," in connection with such a "scheme of redemption;" either the divine attributes, according to any rational or consistent ideas that can be attached to them, must be abandoned, or those books must cease to be regarded as the authentic and unadulterated channels for the communication of the revealed will of God. But I trust an impartial view of the particulars which have been handed down to us, concerning the first creation of man, his delinquency, and its consequences, will render it evident, that the real facts were extremely different from those representations, and that in truth they open the most cheering prospects concerning the *ultimate* destiny of our species, although our *actual* state be represented as in some respects less flattering to our vanity than is ordinarily imagined.

If we compare Gen. i. 24-28, with Psalm viii. 5-9, conformable as they are to similar passages, as Eccles. vii. 29, James iii. 9, there appears every reason to conclude, that the former is intended, not simply as a description of the first man at his creation, and prior to his act of disobedience, but, of the general superiority of the structure and faculties of the human species, to those of every other order of animals; by which they may be said to approach toward a resemblance of Him that created them, more especially by the exercise of that dominion with which they are invested over the inferior creatures, and the privilege which from their first creation to the present day, they have continued to carry into more extended effect, of occupying and "replenishing" almost every part of the habitable globe, with their increasing numbers and power; before which the other orders either disappear, or are rendered in a great degree subservient. The blessing pronounced upon the first pair, Gen. i. 28, is a prediction which has since been gradually realizing in this immense increase of their race, and their acquisitions in knowledge, skill, and power, and which, notwithstanding the errors and perversions to which they have been subjected, have upon the whole been truly great and wonderful. The description is no more *peculiarly* applicable to the first man at his formation, when destitute of all that experience, discipline, skill, and judgment, by which his rational and moral being gradually advances, than it is to the new-born infant which is just entering on the commencement at once of its moral and of its intellectual being. The

*whole* of it applies in its full extent only to the *advancing* nature and condition of the human species, as they multiply in numbers, as they collect by mutual association the fruits of their individual and growing experience and observation, as they acquire skill, strength, energy, and intelligence, by the continued and varied exercise of their powers, and *without* which they must forever remain, as they enter into being, the most imbecile, destitute, and imperfect of the orders of animals. In the time of David, men had made very considerable attainments in knowledge, skill, and power, as well as had become very numerous, with the interchanges of commerce and intercourse widely extended; and his general description of the excellence and superiority of his species, is equally noble, and more particular and explicit. He is describing his actual experience of what, at the first creation of man, was delivered in more general terms under the form of a prediction. He particularizes the glorious fulfilment of the primeval blessing upon our race; nor is his description so applicable to the state of the first pair in Paradise, when no animals appear to have been subjected to their use, they *subsisting* upon the fruits and herbs which grew around them; as to the state of things in the days of the Psalmist, when "all sheep and oxen" were fixed to their proper uses in subordination to man, and his acquired powers enabled him to hold the fiercest predatory animals under his dominion. There can be no more reason to imagine that he is here confining his views to man at his first creation, than when he is describing the beauty and harmony of the whole system of nature in the 104th Psalm, where (verses 22, 23,) he represents "the young lions" as retiring to their dens before the rising sun, and the going forth of man; to whose labours the day season, as distinguished from night and darkness, is appropriated.

The ensuing particulars of the narrative, concerning our first parents, are so far from affording any reason to conclude that their nature, either physical or moral, was altogether dissimilar from, and superior to the subsequent condition either of themselves or their descendants, that they appear to yield every indication of the reverse; or that it must have been the same in a very undeveloped and imperfect state. "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." All the

particulars of this description seem evidently intended to convey a humiliating idea of the origin and constitution of man in this life. He owes his existence wholly to the plastic hand of the Creator; he had no more a prior and independent being, as the heathens imagined, than the rest of the animals who were then also first created; he is made of the meanest and most fragile materials, of the very dust of the ground. It was by the function of breathing, which was now imparted to him, that he became animated; and thus he was rendered "a living soul;" a phrase employed in the Scriptures to signify any living creature whatever; see Rev. xvi. 3, and Gen. i. 30, where *life* is, in the original, a living soul, or, as Parkhurst renders the latter term, "*a creature or animal that lives by breathing.*" It has been contended that what God breathed into Adam, must have been 'an emanation from himself, a portion of his own celestial and immortal spirit.' Very different must have been the sentiment of the author of the book of Ecclesiastes, when he declared that men and beasts have all *one* breath; "all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." (Eccl. ix. 19, 20). Indeed no fact is better ascertained than that the faculty of breathing, is simply that of inhaling a portion of the atmosphere into the lungs; by the action of which upon the blood, the animal heat and life is maintained in man and in beasts, and without which life and sense are quickly extinguished. That "the breath of God" simply signifies the air or wind, by which frost is produced, in Job xxxvii. 10, is evident; and that it has the same sense in its application to the respiratory organs, clearly appears, Ezek. xxxvii. 8-10, where the call from God to the "winds to breathe upon the slain, that they may live," without which the organized men had no life, corresponds with this "breathing into the nostrils" of the first man "the breath of life," whereby he "became a living soul." That the life thus communicated is no less precarious and transient, than to our experience and observation it appears to be, is manifest from many Scriptural declarations. "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he, to be accounted of." (Isa. ii. 22.) Could the prophet have imagined that the breath of life, the vital principle, of which he speaks in such humiliating terms, is an inextinguishable spark of heavenly flame, an ethereal, immortal spirit? Such were not the ideas of the scriptural writers, or of the distinguished characters con-

cerning whom they treat, with respect to the mind or thinking faculties, any more than to the body of man in his *present* state. It was to the power and special interposition of God, in *raising the dead*, and transforming the mere living creature to a quickening "or-life-giving" spirit, that they looked forward for the blessings of an immortal existence. "That was not *first* which is *spiritual*, but that which is *animal*, and *afterward* that which is *spiritual*"; and men have greatly erred in entertaining a contrary supposition, or imagining that both are blended together in the same person. They are both *now* mortal: man's "breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish," Ps. cxlvi. 4. "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave *whither he goeth*," Eccles. ix. 10. "They" therefore "who are fallen asleep are perished," if there be no resurrection of the dead, 1 Cor. xv. 18. "The first man," or man as he was in the first instance created, "was of the earth, earthy;" his origin was low and elementary, both in body and mind; his frame was from the earth; his life was simply sustained by inhaling the air; and the first dawns of intellect and moral sense, originating from the same sources, were few, gross, and imperfect. It is man in his *second* estate, when by experience, discipline, and practice, he has advanced high in the scale of intelligence and moral capabilities and attainments, who will be graciously adopted as an heir of immortality; will be "delivered from the bondage of corruption," both physical and moral, into the glorious liberty of "*a child of God*," and advanced to the blessing of an "*incorruptible*" or "*everlasting life*."

(No. 3 to be Concluded in our next.)

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Stanzas.

Written on viewing the Cathedral at Elgin, March 1832.

I.

Oh, thou hast reason, ELGIN! to be proud
Of thy Cathedral;—'tis a noble pile!
And holy now, as when the anthem loud
And prayer ascended from the pure and vile
Erst gathered round its altar! for its aisle
Is now by Nature carpetted—its walls
By Heaven's own arch o'er-canopied,—and while
The Stranger marks its ruins, he recalls
A homely worth aught that from the misted falls!

II.

Perchance he gazeth on a broken arch,
 A ruined column, or forsaken altar,
 Or lightly treadeth in his thoughtful march
 The tomb of some proud prelate, who could palter
 Himself perhaps, yet spare no lay defaulter;
 And oh! the Pilgrim may from these, I ween,
 Withouten priest, or prayer-book, or psalter,
 Perceive how frail man is, and aye hath been,
 And learn to look beyond this world to the unseen!

III.

Perchance he thinketh of departed ages,
 And myriad souls vanished from the earth;
 In mental-eye, calls up the fools and sages,
 Who came and went, as if they ne'er had birth;
 Wanders in fancy to the mouldering hearth
 Of peasant long-departed, or of peer—
 Beholds all desolate, where life and mirth
 And gladness reigned through many a bygone year,
 And then he trusts that Heaven hath all that's wanting here.

IV.

Still thou hast reason, ELGIN! to be proud
 Of thy Cathedral; for it shows man's power
 As well as impotence:—oh! not the shroud
 Prepared for him who hath his little hour
 On life's stage strutted, nor the withered flower
 Erewhile so full of loveliness, displays
 Of frailty such an emblem; yet in tower,
 And arch, and area may be seen the traits
 And impress of the mind, which dies not nor decays!

V.

Yes, there is mind—apparent not alone
 In the gigantic grandeur of its plan—
 But e'en each curious and fretted stone
 Bears mind's rich stamp, and shows indeed what man
 Hath power to accomplish—though a very span
 Of life for these and all his works be given!
 True, they are not the noblest which he can
 Or ought to aim at, as the heir of Heaven,
 Yet well they mark his power—ay, such old ruins even!

VI.

And many a generation hath gone by,
 Since thine old walls, majestic Pile! were based;
 And many a race will yet spring up and die,
 Ere thou shalt be, old as thou art, erased!
 But thou hast not been useless—man hath praised
 His Maker, and the troubled soul's been calmed
 Within thy courts!—e'en now, though old and crazed,
 Thy ruins, mute yet eloquent, have psalmed,
 And in one breast at least, fine feelings have embalmed!

R. H.

REVIEW.

An Expostulatory Letter, addressed to the President, Secretary, and other Preachers constituting "the Wesleyan Methodist Conference," assembled at Liverpool, in July, 1832; charging that body with maintaining and enforcing Irrational and Antiscriptural Dogmata, as fundamental principles in their system of Theology; with a Challenge to a Discussion upon the points at issue; and a brief statement of the only True System of Christian Theology. By Samuel Tucker, V. D. M. Professor of Christian Theology. (Upwards of 30 years a Preacher in the Conference Connexion.) Liverpool: Worrall & Taylor.

A CURIOUS title, prefixed to a curious pamphlet. The writer is evidently an original thinker, an acute reasoner, and a fearless advocate of what he believes to be Divine truth. Perhaps he has allowed the provocations of his opponents, and what now appears to him the glaring absurdities of the falsely called "orthodox" system to extort from him some expressions which do not well accord with that high and holy cause in which he has engaged. Possibly too, he will, on further examination and reflection, find, that such phrases as "the divine filiation and consequent essential divinity of the LOGOS, as the MONOGENES of the Father;" "the *generically spiritual identity* of the Son of God, with the offspring of Adam and Eve, as under God, the true and proper Father of all human spirits," are as mystified and as totally inapplicable to the promotion of sound morality, true piety, and spiritual devotion, as are those antiscriptural dogmas which he so dexterously exposes and so justly condemns. However, the pamphlet is another proof added to the thousands already furnished, that whoever sits down to a perusal of the New Testament, determined to close in with its direct and unequivocal testimony respecting the nature of God and the person and character of Jesus Christ, will rise from that perusal with an undoubting conviction, that God is there declared to be one, eternal, almighty, omnipresent Spirit; and that he who is styled the Father, is the only true God, and the only object of religious worship; and that Jesus Christ is distinct from, inferior to, and dependant upon God the Father, and received from God the Father all his power to become the instructor, the saviour, and judge of man.

Satisfied on these points himself, Mr. Tucker seems anxious to convince Trinitarians generally, and the Wesleyan Methodist preachers in particular, that a Trinity of

co-equal, co-eternal persons, making up the one God, is unknown to the Sacred Volume; but he finds it a most difficult task, it would appear, to overcome error, prejudice, pride, and worldly interest, united as they are under the banners of blustering, anathematizing orthodoxy.

Still there can be no doubt, that the questions proposed by Mr. Tucker must be found by the Trinitarian as difficult to be answered fairly and satisfactorily, as they are necessary to be asked by every inquirer after Scripture truth.

"Q. 1.—Does *any one*, and which, of the persons in the Trinity, possess inherently, in, of, by, and from himself alone, all the essential attributes of Deity? If so, must not that person *alone* be 'the only true God?'"

"Q. 2.—Did *any one* person in the Trinity ever worship another person therein, and solemnly declare and confess HIM to be 'the only true God;' and, as such, greater than himself? And if so, was the worshipper, in that instance, correct in his judgment, and soundly orthodox in his principles?"

Besides which, Mr. T. asks, in substance, "how many supreme, eternal, self-existent, and omnipotent Gods are there in the Universe. If but one, is that God one pure simple spirit, or is HE a compound being, consisting of three or any other plural number of distinct spirits? If but one spirit, who is that spirit? Is it not HE who in the New Testament is designated God the Father? Who then is the Lord Jesus Christ, and who is the Holy Ghost? If it requires the conjunction of THREE persons to constitute ONE all-perfect being, what is each person in his individual capacity? A third part of the supreme God? This is the unavoidable consequence, and thus the whole Trinity of 'persons' is undeified *seriatim*. If Jesus Christ be the supreme God, who then is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? And who then is the Son of God? Is Jesus Christ both his own Father and his own Son? Or is God the Father an inferior being? If Christ be the supreme God, who is the 'one Mediator between God and men?' Does Christ mediate between himself and men? If Christ be the supreme God, to whom did he make an atonement? Did God *punish himself to atone to himself* for the sins of mankind?"

And after the foregoing and other kindred questions, Mr. Tucker proceeds to say,

"In my 'Triumph of Scriptural and Rational Truth,' as well as in my forthcoming 'Critical Analysis of Christian Theology,' all the preceding questions are amply discussed, and explicitly, satisfactorily, and triumphantly answered. The errors of all the old

theories are therein detected, exposed, refuted, and exploded; while the celestial harbinger of truth, waving the banner of the cross, bearing the apostolic inscription—‘For there is ONE GOD, and one MEDIATOR between GOD and MEN, the MAN-Christ Jesus, emblazoned upon its shining tapestry, firmly and majestically, ‘walks over’ the arena of this controversy, without seeing the face of an opponent to impede his victorious progress. Before that sacred STANDARD, every difficulty vanishes, every error is annihilated,—the infernal harpies of ignorance, prejudice, and bigotry, take their everlasting flight! All the enigmatical problems of *ever-blundering* ‘orthodoxy’ are solved or obliterated: confusion itself is confounded, while her liberated slaves are guided by a sunbeam of divine truth, under the hallowing influence of ‘the Spirit of Truth,’ to the temple of a simple, but cordial worship of ‘the only true God,’ through the mediation of ‘the Son of his love,’ who is the bright effulgence of his Father’s glory, the impressed image of his ineffable hypostasis, and the receptacle and repository of ‘all the fulness of the Godhead, which dwelleth in him bodily.’”

Mr. Tucker thus pointedly and truly addresses the Methodist preachers:

“You ought assuredly to know, at least, the true and proper object of divine worship, and the divinely authorized medium of that worship; whereas, to this hour, most of you know not whether any one person of the Trinity be alone the supreme God, or whether it requires the whole three persons to constitute that God. Neither can many of you tell whether the Lord Jesus Christ be himself ‘the only true God,’ or merely the Son of that God, and our Mediator with HIM. Most of you profess to believe the absurd and self-contradictory dogma, that he is both the one and the other! In fact, you know not whether God be ONE spirit or THREE—ONE being or THREE. You cannot define the individual character or qualities of a ‘person’ in the Godhead, nor do you, in reality, know whether there be THREE supreme GODS or only ONE in the universe! And the reason is obvious:—You do not, you cannot, nor do you even *profess* to understand your own principles.—You say they are ‘incomprehensible mysteries;’ and, by pretending that God is their author, you tax that glorious Being with equal folly, injustice, and cruelty, in giving to mankind an *incomprehensible* revelation of himself, as their *inefficient* guide to the saving knowledge of his person and character!”

There seem to us many inconsistencies scattered up and down this pamphlet. The author, though crying out against prejudice, has a strong prejudice and horror of what he, like many others, calls “Socinianism.” This may, however, be readily forgiven in one so lately bound in darkness and error. That he is sincerely anxious for truth, and that his labours will tend to its further determination, we cannot question, and therefore we heartily rejoice in his exertions.

Illustrations of Political Economy, Nos. 11 & 12.—*For Each and for All; and French Wines and Politics; by Harriet Martineau. Charles Fox, London.*

THE first of these tales is equal to any thing Miss Martineau has yet produced, in liveliness and vigour of dialogue, and felicity of illustration; but as a story, it appears to us deficient in interest and dramatic effect. The leading characters talk indeed with great power and brilliancy, but there is something less natural and spontaneous in the manner in which the scientific illustrations are brought forward, than on some former occasions. A Lord F—— had taken a wife from the stage—a very beautiful, and what is better, a very wise woman. The world, as might be expected, wonders a little, and sneers a great deal at this step—certainly judging *a priori*, rather a rash one, Lord and Lady F—— however, care little about the world's wonder or ill-nature either; their time in town or country is spent in trying to do good upon the largest scale and in the soundest manner; and their endeavours to effect this, elicit some of those striking illustrations of the doctrines and precepts of political economy, in which the authoress chiefly excels. Miss Martineau is fired with a generous enthusiasm in favour of the aristocracy of talent, and her object in forming this apparent *més-alliance* is obviously to throw a lustre around the latter, and to show its value to society, by its effects upon public morals and social happiness. The object is benevolent, and the execution is equal to the object. There is a speculating merchant of the name of Waldie also introduced, who nearly ruins his family by unwise speculations, and at last actually becomes insane from the effects of joy, at the fortunate issue of a mercantile adventure. We shall extract the scene, in which poor Waldie appears in a state of violent excitation, which to us, appears one of the most powerful pieces of painting we have ever met with.

“I do wish Waldie would control his spirits a little,” said Maria, showing the note to her sister, and then looking as if she would fain have withdrawn it. “How can he bring himself to write in such a way?”

Isletia had nothing to say at the moment; not even congratulations on the wealth of Croesus having crowned all these vicissitudes. She asked for the children. They were gone out with Theresa and their own nurse-maid. She offered a turn in the shrubbery; but Maria was not, she presently saw, strong enough

to walk. She threw open the bay-windows, and beckoned her sister to come and be refreshed by the feel of the mild autumn air, and the bloom of the autumn roses, and the tranquil beauty of the green prospect. There they sat, watching and working, letting drop a few words now and then, but keeping up nothing like conversation, and looking out as often as a horseman might be seen through the trees, or a carriage heard in the road. At last, the sound of a horse's hoofs reached them, far too rapid for safety, they were sure; and immediately, Waldie was seen on horseback, approaching at tremendous speed, with something white before him, which proved to be his two elder children.

"Mercy! mercy!" cried his wife, putting her hands before her eyes.

"Thank God! the gate is open. They are in! Safe!" exclaimed Letitia, as the horseman wheeled round the corner and up to the window, checking his steed so suddenly as to throw it on its haunches, setting the pebbles flying in all directions, and mingling his loud burrah with the laughter of the younger child, who saw nothing but fun in all this. The elder one was convulsed with terror.

It was well some one was on the spot; for Waldie threw down both the children as if they had been mere bundles of clothes. They were caught,—not, however, without so much slight bruising as called forth their cries to add to the confusion.

"O Waldie," shrieked his wife, "what are you about?"

"Look, Look, Look!" he cried, flourishing his whip over his head, clapping spurs to his horse, and trampling the beds, walks, and lawn alike, and finishing by making his horse leap high and still higher shrubs. He finished by fixing his eye upon the greenhouse, as if he contemplated a leap there too.

"Mr. Waldie," said Letitia, in her steadiest tone, "what are you doing?"

In a moment he was off, had flung the bridle on the neck of the sweating and trembling horse, and was by her side, swearing deep oaths that she had ever governed his life and ever should govern it. With her in wealth, as with her in poverty, he would....

Maria had rushed into the house upon this, but not the less did Letitia by eye, and gesture, and word, command him from her, and prevail for the moment. He obeyed when she pointed his way into the house, and she was still standing, faint in body and spirit, with the poor children clinging to her, when Therese came in from the road, breathless, and sinking with terror. When she saw the children safe, she burst into tears: she had feared that she might have to answer for their lives, from not having had presence of mind to evade Waldie's vehement desire that the children should have a ride.—Her mistress gave her a few directions, which she hastened into the house to execute, and Letitia, after giving the servants a charge to take the children into the nursery and keep them there, repaired to her sister. She found Maria lying across the bed, groaning in heart-breaking grief.

No. 12, "French Wines and Politics," lands us in the early periods of the *first* French Revolution. The object

of it is to illustrate the two kinds of value, value in use and value in exchange. Antoine is the possessor of a celebrated vineyard on the banks of the Garonne, and his brother Charles is a wine merchant in Paris; these, with the wife and children of the latter, a specimen of the old corrupt system, in the shape of a certain Marquis de Thou, and one Steele, an English merchant from Bourdeaux, are the chief agents in the tale, which is very simple in itself, but contains some powerful sketches of the glories and the horrors, the gloom and the grandeur of those wonderful times. As we wish all to read for themselves, we shall not attempt ~~any thing like an analysis of the story~~, but merely extract the eloquent and spirit-stirring description of the taking of the Bastille.

The spectacles of a lifetime were indeed to be beheld within the compass of this one scene. The most vivid emotions to which all ranks and all ages are subject were here in full play: all the various grouping which life affords was here presented; the entire elements of the scenery of human character were here congregated in infinite and magnificent combinations. The appeals to eye and ear alone were of unprecedented force; those addressed to the spirit equalled in stimulus the devotion of Leonidas in his defence, and excelled in pathos the meditation of Marius among more extensive ruins than those which were now tumbling around. From the heights of the fortress might be seen a heaving ocean of upturned faces, when the breeze dispersed at intervals the clouds of smoke which veiled the sun, and gave a dun and murky hue to whatever lay beneath. If a flood of sunshine now and then poured in to make a hundred thousand weapons glitter over the heads of the crowd, the black row of cannon belched forth their red fires to extinguish the purer light. The foremost of the people, with glaring eyes, and blackened and grinning faces, looked scarcely human, in their excess of eagerness, activity, and strength. Yet more terrific were the sounds: the clang of the tocsin at regular intervals, the shouts of the besiegers, the shrieks of the wounded, the roar of the fire which was consuming the guard-houses, the crash of the ruins falling on all sides, a heavy splash in the moat from time to time, as some one was toppled from the ramparts to be smothered in its mud,—and above all these, the triumphant cries of victory and liberty achieved,—these were enough to dizzy weak brains, and give inspiration to strong ones. Here were also the terrors which sooner or later chill the marrow of despotism, and the stern joy with which its retribution fires the heart of the patriot. Here were the servants of tyranny quailing before the glance of the people; kneeling soldiers craving mercy of mechanics, of women, of some of every class whom, in the execution of their fancied duty, they had outraged. Here were men shrinking from violence with a craven horror, and women driven by a sense of wrong to show how disgusting physical courage may be made. Here were also sons led on to the attack by their hitherto anxi-

our fathers; husbands thrust forward into danger by their wives; and little children upreared by their mothers amidst the fire and smoke, to take one last look of the hated edifice which was soon to be levelled with the ground. The towers of palaces might be seen afar, where princes were quaking at this final assurance of the downfall of their despotic sway, knowing that the assumed sanctity of royalty was being waisted away with every puff of smoke which spread itself over the sky, and their irresponsibility melting in fires lighted by the hands which they had vainly attempted to fetter, and blown by the breath which they had imagined they could stifle. They had denied the birth of that Liberty whose baptism in fire and in blood was now being celebrated in a many-voiced chant with which the earth should ring for centuries. Some from other lands were already present to hear and join in it; some free Britons to aid, some wondering slaves of other despots to slink homewards with whispered tidings of its import; for from that day to this, the history of the fall of the Bastille has been told as a secret in the vineyards of Portugal, and among the groves of Spain, and in the patriotic conclaves of the youth of Italy, while it has been loudly and joyfully proclaimed from one end to the other of Great Britain, till her lipping children are familiar with the tale.

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, FEBRUARY 1, 1832.

THERE has been considerable excitement on matters of religion, within the last few months at Paisley. A paper calling itself "The Friendly Monitor," has been circulated among all the inhabitants weekly. Extracts from "The Scottish Guardian," contrasting Paisley in past years and present times, have also been printed, and industriously and widely disseminated. Meetings for worship have also been held in the various Churches during the week; a cheap edition of the Confession of Faith printed, and the people earnestly exhorted to procure copies, and to adhere to the belief of their forefathers. The fanaticism of the publications may be judged of by the fact, that their authors announce themselves qualified "to preach a fuller and clearer Revelation, than did the Saviour to the Jews." They describe Paisley as abounding in corruption, and immorality, and Unitarianism as the cause. The friends of rational and scriptural principles at Paisley, could not remain silent under imputations as false as they were illiberal. They appointed a deputation to wait on Mr. Harris at Glasgow, to arrange a Course of Lectures to be delivered at Paisley, on Sunday evenings, during the winter. The following Address to the inhabitants of Paisley, was drawn up, printed, and circulated; and Rev. H. Clarke, Messrs. Wells, Lloyd, and Cooper, Students at the University, Rev. A. Macdonald of Greenock, and Mr. W. McKean of Glasgow, cheerfully engaged to undertake the illustration and defence of Christian truth.

"Inhabitants of Paisley,--The Unitarian Christian Congress-

tion view with complacency every enlightened effort to promote the knowledge and practice of Christianity. But they deplore the attempt of any sect to perpetuate or increase its power by impugning the motives and misrepresenting the opinions of others.

"Such, however, has been the general practice towards Christian Unitarians, of those who arrogate to themselves the titles of Orthodox and Evangelical; formerly, from the Pulpit to inflame the prejudices of their congregations, and latterly from the Press, to bias the judgment of the whole community.

"Fair and rational argument is always valuable; correct and scriptural information, enlightening the mind and improving the heart, is above all price. To these would Christian Unitarians always listen with earnest attention, and rejoice in their dissemination among the community. Far different, however, are the teachings of '*Monitors*' that have nothing '*Friendly*' to man or society but their titles—or '*Guardians*,' which are the vehicles of misrepresentation and abuse of Paisley and its inhabitants. In these feelings, Christian Unitarians are persuaded they shall be joined by all persons of intelligence and candour, for the veil of sophistry is too thin for them to be imposed upon by those who hold themselves forth as '*The stated Ambassadors of Christ*,' and affirm themselves qualified, '*to preach a fuller and clearer Revelation than did the Saviour to the Jews*.'

"The manner in which these pretensions are supported, is worthy of their irrational and unscriptural nature. They revive the Heathen and Jewish notion that such as 'those Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices,' and 'the eighteen on whom the Tower of Siloam fell,' (Luke xiii. 1-5.) and 'the man who was born blind,' (John ix. 2, 3.) are punished for their own sins or the sins of others, although such libels on the Deity were positively contradicted by the blessed Jesus.

"They ascribe the distress, ignorance, irreligion and demoralization of the poor inhabitants of Paisley, not to the prodigal waste of the national resources—not to the burthen of taxation—not to the luxurious and licentious examples of the wicked great—not to family insubordination arising from the bribe held out for sons to spurn parental reproof and become soldiers, and to prevent which, paternal judgment was smothered, and maternal solicitude was constrained to conceal the faults, and, even to furnish the means for continuing the irregularities of their loved but thoughtless offspring—not to the corrupt contamination of the army—nor to the brutalizing effect of so many having been engaged in active war, and the return of these legions into the bosom of society.—No, but entirely overlooking the primary and efficient causes, they ascribe these results to a subordinate effect, and state as its fruits, the prevalence of '*Unitarianism, Infidelity, and reckless profanity*,' which three classes are indiscriminately implicated as the sinners who have brought on the ruin of the people.

"The folly of the charge, as applied to Christian Unitarianism, can only be equalled by its utter opposition to truth and fact. There is a great gulf fixed between Unitarianism and reckless profanity. Unitarian Geneva is the most moral city in Europe. Let it

be contrasted with Calvinistic Edinburgh, and it will exhibit a cheering testimony to the practical value of Christian Unitarianism.

"The Christian Unitarians of Paisley, therefore, appeal from their ignorant or interested calumniators to the unbiassed, candid, and independent portion of their fellow inhabitants. Their object is the attainment and dissemination of truth—the advancement of the Reformation—the diffusion and practice of benevolence. They have no creed but the Bible. Each is free to judge of its contents according to that portion of understanding with which they are individually endowed, and the degree of information they personally possess. They scout as a chimera and deny the necessity of complete uniformity of theological opinions. The endless variety of minds and circumstances which precludes uniformity in other sciences, bears with equal if not increased force in theology. They agree to differ as to mental subjects—they strive for unity of spirit in the bond of peace.

"Inhabitants of Paisley,—Your neighbours and friends, the members of the Unitarian Christian Congregation, invite your serious and candid attention to a Course of Lectures, &c."

The Lectures have hitherto been well attended, and appear to have occasioned considerable attention.

THE services connected with the Eighth Anniversary of the opening of the Unitarian Meeting-house, Greengate, Salford, took place on Sunday, December 30, when Sermons were preached in the morning, at that Chapel, by the Rev. J. R. Beard, the minister, and in Mosley-street Chapel, by the Rev. J. J. Tayler; and in the evening, in Cross-street Chapel, by the Rev. J. G. Robberds; and collections made in aid of the fund for liquidating the debt on the Greengate Meeting-house, amounting altogether to upwards of £40. On Wednesday evening, January 2d, three hundred and ninety-five ladies and gentlemen, chiefly members of the three congregations, took tea together in the Exchange Dining Rooms, which were tastefully decorated with festoons and wreaths of flowers and evergreens. After tea, the Rev. J. G. Robberds took the chair, and introduced a number of sentiments, which were responded to in excellent addresses, by Richard Potter, Esq. M. P. the Revds. J. R. Beard, Edward Hawkes, W. Smith of Bolton, William Johns, and J. J. Tayler, Mr. James Aspinall Turner, Rev. William Gaskell, Mr. John Ashworth, Mr. Richard Collins, Revds. T. May of Stand, and F. Howorth of Bury. The proceedings which appeared to afford a highly rational gratification to all present, terminated shortly after ten o'clock; and the wish was expressed by many, that this meeting (which was adopted in preference to the Anniversary Dinner of former years) would not be the last of the kind. It is not likely that it will, for independently of the pleasure enjoyed by those present, £16 were realised towards the liquidation of the Chapel debt, although the tickets were only eighteenpence each.

THE Rev. W. Duffield of Thorne and Stainforth, Yorkshire, has become the minister of the Unitarian Congregation at Stockton-upon-Tees, Durham.

THE
CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

No. 79.

MARCH, 1833.

Vol. VII.

On the Importance of adhering to Acknowledged Principles in the Interpretation of the Scriptures.—No. 3.

(Concluded from page 206.)

THE situation of our first parents in Paradise indicates the great simplicity, no less than the innocence of their primitive state. They were neither provided with food nor clothing by their own skill or exertions; but all was furnished to them by the immediate care and provision of their Creator, as occasions arose. The garden, containing "every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food," was planted by the Divine hand, and thus they were at once put in possession of the provisions necessary or conducive to their subsistence and enjoyment in man's most elementary state; which they would not have been, had their manual skill, and their intellectual and moral powers been such as would enable them to produce and appropriate these and more extensive acquisitions by their personal industry and application. They but stretched forth their hands to obtain an abundant supply of the most agreeable food; and every sense was regaled almost without any effort on their part, while they might gradually learn to check the exuberance of vegetation, and to collect and distribute its seeds—a situation adapted to the just dawning faculties, but not suited to that ampler grasp and superior vigour which appertains to these advancing energies. The two emblematic trees "of life" and "of knowledge," were appropriately used in conveying to them some leading ideas concerning the relations between moral and physical good and evil. The tree of *knowledge* indicated to them the duty and necessity of obedience to God, and the awful consequences of disobedience. From the fruit of this tree they were expressly prohibited, while that of the tree of life seems to have been reserved to be granted to them conditionally, as the reward of their obedience. This seems a method of instilling moral ideas into the mind suited to the infancy of its conceptions; it was a prohibition of most easy observance, being accompanied with the grant freely to partake of all the other

fruits of the garden of Eden. The threatened consequence was most awful; while the pledge of life, extended perhaps to perpetuity, held forth by the tree of life as the blessing of God upon their obedience, must have been most animating to its practice. Such a trial of virtue could only have been held forth in adaptation to moral powers of a most elementary and imperfect description; while the whole representation shows that man is a frail creature, whose very existence is intimately connected with his obedience to God, through which indeed he may look forward to a lengthened extension and increase of its blessings.

This easy prohibition, notwithstanding the awful threat by which it was accompanied, and the cheering prospect of reward to obedience presented in the fruit of a neighbouring tree, was soon violated. But, in this voluntary breach of the charge of her bounteous Creator, the woman is represented as having been misled and beguiled by "the serpent," which is said to have surpassed every other *beast* in subtilty. This surely can only represent the ideas which Adam and Eve, in their simplicity, had formed of this creature, amid their infantine observations and musings upon the various animals with which they were surrounded. The serpent was not endowed with the faculty of speech for the purpose of deluding her; but her busy imagination saw in its aspect and movements, something which corresponded with the workings of her own mind, and to which she attributed the sense which she herself formed into articulate sounds. She beheld the tree with a desire of tasting its fruit, which now being matured, appeared peculiarly inviting; and meditating upon the meaning of the phrase, "*the knowledge of good and evil*," she inferred that it must have a power of imparting wisdom, of which she could not otherwise be possessed; and hence she had the presumption to conclude that her Maker must be under the influence of some unworthy motive in precluding her from the use of it. These suggestions she fondly attributed to the serpent, which had caught her eye in her solitary wanderings, with whose silent aspect and expressions she associated the ideas which passed in her own mind. All this is *possible*, and I believe *natural* enough, under such circumstances; nothing being more common than for the Laplander, in a similar state of solitude and defect of culture, to imagine that the animals, which form almost

his only companions, are capable both of receiving and communicating those ideas which are in reality suggested only by his own mind. In her case, as in that of the Jew, whom the Apostle Paul personifies, it was "sin, which, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived her," and by it gave cause to the sentence of mortality and its attendant evils. The historian, like the Apostle, glides into the allegorical form of expression, in treating of the internal operations of the mind. Nor can it be reasonably supposed that this frail, inexperienced individual, was assailed by a great evil spirit, of angelic energies, vying with Omnipotence, and making use of the organs of a serpent, for the purpose of more effectually deluding her, any more than that the power of error and iniquity, which misled so large a portion of the Jews from their obedience to God and his Christ, was a personage of this description. The great lesson inculcated by both is, that those moral errors, to which in this "early dawn of our eternal day," we are all liable, is the source or attendant of the physical evils appertaining to the present state. The same allegorical form of dialogue which is employed in depicting the operations of mind in our primitive mother, on this occasion, is used, Job i. 6-12, to denote a determination of God himself to make trial of the virtue of that patriarch by a bodily infliction; and in the New Testament, all who were afflicted by sickness or disease, or any of the evils attendant upon mortality, including that event, are represented as being bound or "oppressed" by Satan. All these representations seem designed to convey the idea, that moral imperfection and evil is the final cause of the ills of mortality, while these are destined for the discipline and correction of the former. The Almighty certainly did not receive advice from a Satan, or any "evil spirit" whatever, though he is figuratively represented as doing so in the place just referred to, and in 2 Chron. xviii. 20, 21. But this scenic mode of expression is employed for the purpose of showing, in a lively and impressive point of view, that even the evils, whether natural or moral, with which mankind are visited, are acting in subordination to his all-wise purposes. So both the good and the evil suggestions which arose in the mind of Eve, are represented by the figures of a dialogue between "the woman" and "the serpent"—one of "the creatures which the Lord God had" recently made, to show, perhaps, in

a similar manner, that the evil as well as the good movements of the mind are in truth the creatures of God, which are acting a part, however apparently pernicious, in subservience to his purposes. When Paul referred to the deception to which "the woman" was subjected, he evidently viewed her conduct under the idea of a general image, or exemplar of the frailty of her sex; it must, therefore, in his opinion, have been a natural representation of the workings of the female mind under circumstances analogous to those by which she was exercised. But it would have been totally of a different character, and wholly inapplicable to women generally, had a kind of semi-deity of wickedness employed his powers of delusion to mislead this comparatively "untutored" daughter of humanity.

"When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." All this is descriptive of conduct evidently resulting from the natural workings of their minds; there is no intimation that Adam was influenced by any other motive than the circumstance of its being presented to him by his wife, in whose guilt and its consequences he seems to have determined to be a partaker. Here, then, is so far from being any indication of an extraordinary strength and perfection in the moral powers which it required the subtlety of a fallen archangel to overcome, that a humiliating exhibition is presented of that moral imbecility which is the attendant of inexperienced, undisciplined humanity. Eve's cupidity found its excitement in the imaginary suggestions of the serpent, whose appearance had engaged her attention, and with whose supposed *wisdom* she was prepossessed, while that of her husband was promoted by his sympathy with the object of his affections. Their desire, and its avidity in thus easily overcoming their regard to the known and acknowledged command of God, whose power was so conspicuous in their recent formation, and that of every object of nature, and of whose bounty they had already received large experience, suited to their capacities, render it sufficiently evident that they were indeed in the condition of man in his first estate, with moral powers feeble and imperfectly developed.

Having thus frankly offered my opinion upon the frame and constitution of man in this life, and upon his primitive condition in Paradise, I propose to pursue the subject by examining the particulars of the condemnation which was passed upon Adam, and upon the principle of evil, in the ensuing Number, which will open the view to that redemption, or deliverance from condemnation, or that "justification of life," which is promised by Jesus Christ.

HOMO.

On the Moral Constitution and History of Man.

PART II.—CHAPTER I.

WE have endeavoured to give an account of the Christian Morality, to show in what respects it was distinguished from those precepts and sentiments of authority and of justice by which the world had been almost exclusively governed before the Christian era. We have shown that it rested on the principle of benevolence; exerting itself on the one hand, actively, to do *more* than justice to other men; and on the other hand, *passively*, to be content with less than justice *from* them. We have said, that from the character and condition of human nature, this was the system which alone could render mankind good and happy; but it required the intellectual and moral faculties of men, *collectively*, or of *society*, to be fully developed and exercised, before they were susceptible of being influenced and governed by such principles.

It was the chief object and design of Divine Providence, by means of its revelations, to instruct and educate mankind for this destiny; and the accomplishment of it was to form "the reign of God upon earth"—"the kingdom of the Divine Messiah," which was to supersede all the former kingdoms of the world. That this event has not taken place, however, *as yet*, is but too obvious; and, therefore, in order to show that such *delay* does not disprove our theory of the progressive improvement of the world, but rather, that it is a consequence and illustration of it, we proceed in our sketch of its moral history.

At the commencement of the Christian era, we have seen that mankind were far from having any idea or experience of those moral principles which Christianity enjoins on them, as the rule of conduct in their social

relations and intercourse with each other. In the nature of things, therefore, and in accordance with the expectations of its Founder, the Christian religion could not succeed *quickly* in the conversion of the world even to its nominal authority, and much less in practically moulding the character of its professors to its benevolent and sublime spirit.

The prejudices, the habits, and the institutions of former ages, were all opposed to it; and even when its external evidence and intrinsic merit convinced men's understandings of its superiority to other systems, there remained a great number of natural passions, interests, and difficulties, in the way of its practical success. Notwithstanding all these difficulties, however, its effects upon the state of society soon came to be very considerable.

Christianity improved the world, but, unfortunately, at the same time the spirit of the world corrupted Christianity; as a brilliant colour, mixed with an opaque one, produces a shade corresponding to the proportions of the mixture; or it may be, that the light only streaks and chequers the darkness. Now, some people regarding the matter only in the dark point of view, occupy their minds solely with lamentations for the increasing degeneracy of the Church, from the first century till the Reformation of the sixteenth. Others delight to exhibit the benefits which society derived from the influence of the Church during the same period. Each are so far right and so far wrong; while their respective prejudices cause them to regard the various characters, events and institutions of the middle ages, in the most opposite lights.

I propose to treat these topics separately.—First, the causes which impeded the progress and influence of true Christianity, or which corrupted its nominal profession.—Second, the salutary effects which it produced upon society in spite of such impediments. In this way, I hope to keep clear of many difficulties in attempting a precise estimate of those characters and events, about which there has been so much controversy. It will suffice for our purpose, that we can so mark and define the influence of the impeding causes of error as to avoid them in future, and so to appreciate the active and successful energies of truth, as to cherish and follow them out to their destined issue. When we have done this, and looked back upon our investigation, we shall be able to distinguish a marked line of progressive improvement, although it may have

appeared broken, retrograde, or obscure, at particular stages.

The first and most general cause which prevented the reception of Christianity, in some instances, and which in others obscured the perception of its true character, was the incapacity of mankind, as yet, to admit and to contemplate, in all its beauty, the idea of a benevolent Divinity and of a benevolent morality. Fear and distrust of the Deity, and fear and distrust between man and man, smothered that principle of Love upon which every thing hangs that is most excellent and beautiful in piety and in morals.

Nothing can be more clearly revealed in the teaching of Christ, than the paternal and benevolent character of God; but while the disciples durst not gainsay their Master, many of them were deficient in the *faith* of this leading and *peculiar* doctrine of the Gospel. They could not look with open face upon its glory—their weak eyes sought the dim medium of an atonement. To this they had been accustomed, and our Lord, with his wonted condescension, did not deny this consolation to the weaker-minded of his disciples. He authorised them to look to his death and resurrection in such a point of view. But this liberty was abused, and men stupidly fixed their regards upon the sign, instead of the thing signified.

I am aware, that, in reference to the general feelings of professed Christians, I am here entering into very delicate ground; and that such is the jealousy with which some people will watch the tendency of our doctrine in this respect, that it may be well to state at the outset what is the proposition which I mean to establish on this subject; for, unless this is understood and carried along with you, the ambiguity of some terms, which cannot be avoided, will lead to mistakes. Let it therefore be remembered, that I distinctly and unequivocally admit, that atonements, or expiations for sin, were instituted, or permitted by divine authority, under the Patriarchal and Jewish dispensations. Farther, that the death and resurrection of Christ are *occasionally* represented by him as the antitype of those former sacrifices. In this view, he says that “he gave his life a ransom for many;” and he was pointed out by John the Baptist as “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” I have said that he does this only *occasionally*, by which it is

meant, that he seldom teaches such doctrine expressly. He alludes to it only upon a few occasions, and that in rather an incidental manner. It has no place in his sermon on the Mount, which we have asserted to be the summary, or formula of his doctrine; neither in any other formal discourse; nor is it the immediate subject of any of those beautiful parables by which he endeavoured to fix the most essential parts of his doctrine on the memory and imagination of his audience.

While the doctrine of atonement, therefore, is one of Christianity, it is none of the most prominent.

The truth is, that so far as it is connected with any *moral* sentiment—with any practical influence on the believer—it was a Jewish doctrine, and did not require (as was formerly said of the precepts of justice) to be enforced or illustrated by the Messiah. What is the doctrine of the atonement in its *practical* bearing—that is, on the minds of those who worship or regard the Deity through such a medium? It is this:—it impresses upon the mind of the worshipper, “that he is but an unworthy creature—that he must not presume on the favour of God, for any work of righteousness which he hath done;” but must supplicate the Divine Mercy, as one who at the best hath done no more than his duty, and who, in many instances, hath failed even of that. In short, it generates humility and penitence.

But people under these impressions, and when the benevolent character of the Deity is not understood, are apt to fall into despondency. Another *practical* object of atonement, therefore, was to cheer the minds of the humble and the penitent by some express *assurance* of the Divine placability towards such worshippers. In olden time, this was given by some sensible token of the acceptance of their sacrifices and prayers. The consuming of the sacrifice by fire from heaven, was one of those tokens of which we read in the early ages of the world. But as the continuance and frequent occurrence of this, in answer to every individual worshipper, would have been inconsistent with the general plan of Providence, as interfering with the fixed laws of Nature, an authorised ritual and law were framed to convey a similar assurance, generally, to a multitude. They were *assured* by the *tokens* of such an institution, that those who worshipped God, in the manner prescribed, and with the proper moral sentiments (for the

encouragement of which such tokens were framed), would find acceptance with God. All those ceremonies were memorials of an original *assurance* given to their fathers, by the actual descent of fire from heaven, and other miracles, testifying that God would be gracious not only to *them*, but to all those who followed *their* faith and obedience, who had been the immediate appellants to heaven at the time. In this manner, authorised atonements allayed the fears of the timid penitents, and inspired their minds with a certain confidence and love of God, which they durst not otherwise have indulged.

I beg that it may be understood, that these remarks are made not with the view of supporting any *theory* about atonements, in regard to the motives and reasons of the Deity, in fixing them after any specific manner. It is solely with a view to the *moral principles* on which they are founded, as regards the sentiments of man; and I trust, in that respect, there can be no question with any candid person who is attentive to my statement. I have said, that the *practical use* of authorised atonements was to inspire humility and penitence towards God on the one hand—confidence and gratitude on the other. The reason *why* the sacrifice of animals was generally fixed upon, and *why* the death of Christ upon the cross was appointed, is a different thing, into which we do not at present inquire.

But having thus defined the practical design and use of atonements, we now remark, that the *moral* of them properly belonged to the Jewish school, and to the code of justice—not to the dispensation of Christianity, and to the code of benevolence. Even the death of Christ, considered in the view of an atonement, is to be included in this remark—that is to say, while his atonement was as much a matter of truth as the atonements under the Mosaic Law, and was every way more excellent than they were; yet to view the Christian religion under this aspect, was only a condescension to Jewish or other ancient prejudices, and because the moral sentiments of mankind were as yet only in a state of *transition* from the principles of authority and of justice, to those of benevolence. Christians of weaker minds, or of stronger prejudices, were, and are authorised to regard the death and resurrection of Christ, so as to excite in their minds

the moral sentiments we have just described, as connected with the idea of an atonement.*

But while we are allowed thus to excite our minds to virtue by the doctrine of atonement, Christianity hath provided "a more excellent way," and a way which is peculiarly *her own*. The doctrine of atonement she holds in common with Judaism and other systems; or rather, she *suffers it*, out of condescension to the fears and infirmities of people accustomed to the old ideas and prejudices—prejudices characteristic of man in his weaker and more infant moral state, whether of the world, or of his individual experience. But the doctrine which came in room of the atonement, and which we are about to speak of, is adapted to the more matured faculties and experience of human nature, and is in truth the same which we have already, but with another view, shown to be the most distinguishing and peculiar characteristic of Christianity, namely, the doctrine of a benevolent Divinity, and of a benevolent morality.

Our argument is this, that, *as* in the precepts of this morality *towards men*, it had superseded the old doctrines of authority and of justice by a more excellent rule; so, in like manner, it begets sentiments of humility and of penitence, of confidence and of love *towards God*, more excellent in their nature than those inspired by the doctrine of atonement, and thus supersedes it also.

To understand this, we remark, that it must be obvious to every one who studies the morality of the Gospel, that it has a depth and breadth far beyond the common sentiments of men. It requires not only external regularity, but inward purity; it forbids not only evil actions, but evil passions and thoughts. It commands us not only to do good to those who do good to us, and to love those who love us; but to do good for evil, and to love our enemies, &c. Now, every man who habitually measures himself by this standard, and endeavours to conform to it, must be convinced how very far he is *naturally* deficient in regard to it, and how difficult it is to attain his object. He feels that before God, he is indeed a sinner, whatever he may appear before man; and that he stands in need

* The *resurrection* of Christ, in this point of view, served the same purpose as the consuming of the original sacrifices by fire from heaven; i. e. it proved to mankind that his sacrifice had been accepted.

both of mercy to pardon, and of grace to help him. And the practical *humility* and *penitence* thus excited, will be superior both in quality and in degree to that excited by the doctrine of atonements.

Certain theologians, sensible of this fact, and yet fond to bend it still to the peculiar system of atonements, have endeavoured to represent our Lord's sermon on the Mount, as a commentary on the Law (as they call it) intended to show "*its spirituality and extent*," and, consequently, our need of the atonement. Now, I would ask, What Law do they mean? Our Lord's sermon is neither a commentary on the Law of Moses, nor on the Law of Justice, but a *contrast* to *them*, as we have already shown. As to the fiction of a certain abstract law, of unbending severity, extending its authority, like the fabled *fates* of antiquity, over God himself, I demand where it is to be found? If our Lord's moral doctrine itself is to be regarded as a law, we must take it as a *whole*, and then I deny that it is characterised by any unbending severity, either as regards God or man. On the contrary, while it produces a deeper and truer sentiment of humility and penitence, so in the like manner the moral doctrine of Christ produces a superior *confidence* and *love* towards God, and thus supersedes the doctrine of atonement in that part of its practical and moral influence, as well as in the matter of humility and penitence.

How can any person, after reading our Lord's sermon on the Mount, imagine that God would enjoin *upon us* forgiveness and love towards our enemies—benevolence even to the evil and unthankful—and all this *without any atonement*, if he himself were incapable of doing any such thing towards us, or were determined not to do it. Can we suppose that we are called upon to excel God himself in goodness?! Far different indeed; for we are urged to such sentiments and conduct, *in order* that we may be "perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect." And to urge us further to such an imitation of the Divine perfection, it is expressly declared, that "if we are tolerant and charitable in judging others, we shall be so judged ourselves"—"if we give, it shall be given to us"—"if we forgive, we shall be forgiven." That is, God hath expressly pledged himself by his WORD spoken by his beloved Son—his accredited Messenger to man; that, in his final judgment, he will be regulated by the same rules which he imposes upon us—namely, by those of benevolence and mercy.

This authenticated *pledge* of Heaven by its *living Word*, comes in the place of the old obscure *tokens* of atonements, and serves the purpose much better. It is more noble and honourable to both parties; for, in our intercourse with God (as it is among men), is it not more to the glory of God to confide in the word of honour, rather than to demand a *legal bond*? The moral feeling in the two cases is perfectly parallel. The one is the confidence of a son, or of a friend—the other the security of a timid slave, or of a suspicious trafficker. The one reposes upon the principle of benevolence—the other clings to the supposed security of law. The moral doctrine of Christ, therefore (if we will represent it as a law), is not severe and unbending in its character—is not the law feigned by theologians. It does not, indeed, allow any presumptuous disregard of its precepts. It goes deeper, and rises higher than the law of justice or of authority. It aims at nothing short of a divine perfection. But, at the same time, it admits of penitence; it makes allowance for ignorance and the force of circumstances; it encourages the weak by the promise of help; the fearful by the assurance of mercy; and incites to good deeds, in all times and circumstances, by the certainty that they shall by no means lose their reward.

All this the moral doctrine of Christ effects, in a simple and straightforward manner, without ambiguity and without mystery; and thus it accomplishes all the moral purposes of atonements, in a more excellent and efficient manner. The *humility* and the *penitence* it produces, are not contaminated by a mixture of slavish fear, and perhaps despair. They are more distinct and discriminating, as being the result of the “knowledge of ourselves,” and not of belief in a *terrible* law, and an *arbitrary* appointment. The *confidence* and the *love* which this moral doctrine inspires towards the character of God, is also of a higher order than that of mere gratitude for a capricious favour. It is the result of esteem, and of knowledge—of the consciousness of congenial sentiments—of the glory and honour of being partakers of the Divine nature. It is the outgoings of a generous spirit, and not the calculations of a sordid selfishness.

This is a doctrine perfectly clear and rational, perfectly suited to the character and condition of such a being as man is, and exalting to the glory of God. The mind,

therefore, which once comprehends, and is governed by it, reposes with unhesitating confidence in the result. It is not shaken by every wind of doctrine; it is not embarrassed in its prayers and devotions; it is not puzzled how to explain and justify its creed to itself, or to others—all is simple, clear, and sublime, like the character of Jesus its author; whose *life* was the express image and representation of his doctrine, and through it, of God, the Father and Fountain of all that is good.

If, therefore, we have salvation—that is to say, *moral health* to our souls—it comes through him and him alone. The law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ; and by no other name or doctrine than this can we be saved; by no other means can we attain that knowledge of God, and intercourse with him, by which eternal life is not only obtained, but in which it consists.

Let no professing Christian, therefore, of confused mind, and partial experience, imagine that our doctrine derogates from the honour of Christ. It exalts him; it dwells, to be sure, rather upon his *doctrine* and his *life*, than upon his *death*; and this we affirm, is just what he himself did, in all his discourses. We do not exclude the consideration of his death, nor deny that it was an atonement; but we say, that this is a subordinate part, and partial view of Christianity, to be superseded and eclipsed by a fuller understanding of its true character and design.

SALTGOATS, Feb. 1833.

W. B.

On Reform.

SIR,—Reform is the glorious watchword, which has been echoed and re-echoed from the northern frontiers of Scotland, to the southern shores of England. Who has not felt his bosom thrill with hope, and his heart beat with exultation, when the gladdening tidings spread like wild-fire through the land, that a nation's prayers had at length been granted? But who, likewise, has not at times experienced some misgivings, lest this long desired boon should fail in bestowing the rich train of blessings, imagination has fondly pictured as its attendants?

How various are the subjects on which the correcting hand of reform has been declared to be necessary; and innumerable “as the motes that people the sunbeam,” are

the heterogeneous and inconsistent plans which have been suggested, in order to carry these measures into execution. Every individual has his own peculiar views, and self-love whispers, and often pretty loudly too, that his are the best calculated to promote his country's welfare. Oh! there is something very flattering to that idol, self, in the belief, that his piercing vision can discern the cause, and his clear judgment suggest the best remedies for a nation's woes; and as a thousandth part of these schemes can never be brought to the test of experience, who can prevent even the wildest visionary from laying "the flattering unction to his soul," that success would assuredly have attended his projects had they been adopted, although failure might be the lot of every other!

After so much has been said and written on this all engrossing theme, it would appear that nothing new remained to be adduced; but there is one view of the subject, which has escaped its share of observation, and on which I would venture to make a few remarks, though by doing so, I am aware, that I run the risk of being ranked amongst those Utopian dreamers, whose vanity I have even now so freely condemned. But be it so; I confess, I, like other reformers, love to picture to myself a bright prospective of enduring bliss, which must unavoidably result from a practical experiment of my theory. Mr. Editor, I boldly avow myself a *Radical Reformer*; and though it may appear rather paradoxical, I must maintain, that no danger can possibly result from excess in what I have to suggest; while the timid are fearful that measures will be carried too far, and the fearless are only fearful, that too little will be attempted, let me assure them both, that for once they will adopt the same opinion, and agree in the conviction that the more thoroughly, the more universally, my system is adopted, the greater will be the benefit resulting from it. It is another advantage too, that the accomplishment of this great and glorious work, does not depend merely on the influential of the land, but that every individual has it in his power materially to assist in promoting its success.

Let us then no more delude ourselves with a vain dream, or distress our minds, because Kings and Ministers do not see with our eyes, and judge with our understandings; rather let us sympathize with the difficulties that surround them, and let us each endeavour to remove some-

thing from the mountain of troubles with which they are encompassed, and which threaten to crush them beneath the weight of the superincumbent mass: let us not seek for the "mote in our brother's eye," but strive to pluck out the beam from our own. : And this observation leads me immediately to my subject; for it is self-reformation that I would, had I a voice loud as thunder—urge on each and all of my fellow countrymen. And who could calculate how immense would be the increase of happiness throughout the land, were every individual to take this word as the guiding star by which, through life, to regulate his conduct.

Let us for a moment suppose, that on some fixed day it was enacted, that every individual should resolutely endeavour to regulate his conduct by the strict rules of Christianity; or, if considering the matter on so large a scale, prevents our realizing it forcibly to our minds, let the experiment be supposed to be tried in a single town, or even in one family. What strict self-government, what caution, what forbearance, what candour would be brought into exercise; how many a hasty expression would be checked, how much petulance, how much vanity, how much unkindness, how much discontent, how much selfishness would be avoided, and at the close of the day, what may we imagine would be the opinion of each member of our reformed family, on the result of their experiment? Surely we cannot hesitate in our answer. Would they not each exclaim, let us another day pursue the plan, and on the morrow how much less irksome would be the task, how much greater the pleasure resulting from it; and such assuredly would be the effects of the experiment, if persevered in through life. Oh! that all mankind would become *practical reformers*, instead of wasting their energies in erecting air-built castles, which, "like the baseless fabric of a vision dissolve, and leave no wreck behind," and which will ever prove vain and useless, because the fabricators of them have no power to reduce to practice their fanciful speculations; but in effecting the object we propose, every individual, however humble his station, however circumscribed his influence, may be a blessing to his country, by assisting in the accomplishment of the sublimest national reformation ever contemplated. But perhaps it will be said, that it never can be effected. No, it never can, if every one declares it impossible; but on the

contrary, much, very much may be accomplished; if every individual will but resolve to do his part and reform *one*. This surely is little to require from a patriot, but it is all that is necessary, to make Britain a happier country than it has ever been; and let not a hundred, or ten, or five, defer the attempt, because they do not know of a million pursuing the same plan. It may likewise be urged that this will be more feasible, when our wishes are accomplished on all the important questions which will be discussed by the new Parliament; but why allow a certain benefit to depend on an event, over which we have no immediate control. Most assuredly, *all* the advantages of the Reform Bill contemplated by *all* politicians never will be realized; let each then do what he can to ameliorate his own condition, and to cause the brow of care to relax, the smile of peace to beam afresh, and home-born joys to bloom with greater beauty and increased luxuriance.

But though some may be ready to grant that this plan may considerably augment domestic happiness, they may be inclined to dispute its efficacy in redressing public grievances. It may be urged, it will not lessen our taxation, it will not relieve us of tithes and teinds, it will not do away with the English poor laws. Yes, we confidently answer, it may in time do all this; it would relieve us of oppressive taxes, for public men would learn to keep a conscience; economy would be practised; sinecures would be abolished. The system of tithes and teinds would be abolished; every sect would be required to support its own ministers, and no individual, when he feels that he is a moral and accountable being, an heir of immortality, would grudgingly contribute his aid towards rewarding, and liberally rewarding too, those who have duties to perform, the most important to the temporal and eternal welfare of all mankind; whose blessed office it is, "to point the path to heaven, and lead the way." The English poor laws likewise would be abrogated, for if men were to practise self-reform, they would learn to respect themselves and others; measures would be adopted to promote general happiness, and the industrious would then be supported by their own labour, instead of starving as paupers, and becoming the degraded recipients of a weekly pittance wrung from the hard-earned store of those, but little raised above them in the scale of society.

Allow me to conclude, Mr. Editor, with expressing a hope, that many a reader of the Pioneer, will, in the sense here proposed, be willing to subscribe himself,
A RADICAL REFORMER.

The Evidences of Christianity. By William Ellery Channing, D. D.

[Extracted from a Volume of Discourses, lately published by the admirable Author, and dedicated to the Religious Society in Boston, Massachusetts, of which he is one of the Ministers.]

ROMANS I. 16: I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.

THESE words of Paul are worthy of his resolute and disinterested spirit. In uttering them, he was not an echo of the multitude, a servile repeater of established doctrines. The vast majority around him were ashamed of Jesus. The cross was then coupled with infamy. Christ's name was scorned as a malefactor's, and to profess his religion was to share his disgrace. Since that time, what striking changes have occurred! The cross now hangs as an ornament from the neck of beauty. It is blazoned on the flags of navies and the standards of armies. Millions bow before it in adoration, as if it were a shrine of the divinity. Of course, the temptation to be ashamed of Jesus is very much diminished. Still it is not wholly removed. Much of the homage now paid to Christianity is outward, political, worldly, and paid to its corruptions much more than to its pure and lofty spirit; and accordingly, its conscientious and intrepid friends must not think it a strange thing to be encountered with occasional coldness or reproach. We may still be tempted to be ashamed of our religion, by being thrown among sceptics who deny and deride it. We may be tempted to be ashamed of the simple and rational doctrines of Christ, by being brought into connexion with narrow zealots, who enforce their dark and perhaps degrading peculiarities as essential to salvation. We may be tempted to be ashamed of his pure, meek, and disinterested precepts, by being thrown among the licentious, self-seeking, and vindictive. Against these perils we should all go armed. To be loyal to truth and conscience under such trials, is one of the signal proofs of virtue. No man deserves the name of Christian, but he who adheres to his principles amidst the unbelieving, the intolerant, and the depraved.

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." So said Paul. So would I say. Would to God that I could catch the spirit as well as the language of the Apostle, and bear my testimony to Christianity with the same heroic resolution. Do any ask, why I join in this attestation to the gospel? Some of my reasons I propose now to set before you; and in doing so, I ask the privilege of speaking as the Apostle has done, in the first person; of speaking in my own name, and of laying open my own mind in the most direct language. There are cases in which the ends of public discourse may be best answered by the frank expression of individual feeling; and this mode of address, when adopted with such views, ought not to be set down to the account of egotism.

I proceed to state the reasons why I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and I begin with one so important, that it will occupy the present discourse.

I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, because it is *true*. This is my first reason. The religion is *true*, and no consideration but this could induce me to defend it. I adopt it, not because it is popular, for false and ruinous systems have enjoyed equal reputation; nor because it is thought to uphold the order of society, for I believe that nothing but truth can be permanently useful. It is *true*, and I say this not lightly, but after deliberate examination. I am not repeating the accents of the nursery. I do not affirm the truth of Christianity, because I was so taught before I could inquire, or because I was brought up in a community pledged to this belief. It is not unlikely that my faith and zeal will be traced by some to these sources, and believing such imputations to be groundless, fidelity to the cause of truth binds me to repel them. The circumstance of having been born and educated under Christianity, so far from disposing me to implicit faith, has often been to me the occasion of serious distrust of our religion. On observing how common it is for men of all countries and names, whether Christians, Jews, or Mahometans, to receive the religion of their fathers, I have again and again asked myself, whether I too was not a slave? whether I too was not blindly walking in the path of tradition, and yielding myself as passively as others to an hereditary faith? I distrust and fear the power of numbers and of general opinion over my judgment; and few things incite me more to repel a doctrine, than intol-

erant attempts to force it on my understanding. Perhaps my Christian education and connexions have inclined me to scepticism, rather than bowed my mind to authority.

It may still be said, that the pride and prejudices and motives of interest, which belong to my profession as a Christian minister, throw a suspiciousness over my reasoning and judgment on the present subject. I reply, that to myself I seem as free from biases of this kind, as the most indifferent person. I have no priestly prepossessions. I know and acknowledge the corruptions and perversions of the ministerial office, from the earliest age of the church. I reprobate the tyranny which it exercises so often over the human mind. I recognise no peculiar sanctity in those who sustain it. I think, then, that I come to the examination of Christianity, with as few blinding partialities as any man. I indeed claim no exemption from error; I ask no implicit faith in my conclusions; I care not how jealously and thoroughly my arguments are sifted. I only ask that I may not be prejudged as a servile or interested partizan of Christianity. I ask that I may be heard as a friend of truth, desirous to aid my fellow-creatures in determining a question of great and universal concern. I appear as the advocate of Christianity, solely because it approves itself to my calmest reason, as a revelation from God, and as the purest, brightest light which He has shed on the human mind. I disclaim all other motives. No policy, no vassalage to opinion, no dread of reproach even from the good, no private interest, no desire to uphold a useful superstition, nothing in short but a deliberate conviction of the truth of Christianity, induces me to appear in its ranks. I should be ashamed of it, did I not believe it true.

In discussing this subject, I shall express my convictions strongly; I shall speak of infidelity, as a gross and perilous error. But in so doing, I beg not to be understood as passing sentence on the character of individual unbelievers. I shall show that the Christian religion is true—is from God; but I do not therefore conclude, that all who reject it are the enemies of God, and are to be loaded with reproach. I would uphold the truth, without ministering to uncharitableness. The criminality, the damnable guilt of unbelief in all imaginable circumstances; is a position which I think untenable; and persuaded as I am, that it prejudices the cause of Christianity, by creat-

ing an antipathy between its friends and opposers, which injures both, and drives the latter into more determined hostility to the truth, I think it worthy of a brief consideration in this stage of the discussion.

I lay it down as a principle, that unbelief, considered in itself, has no moral quality, is neither a virtue nor a vice, but must receive its character, whether good or bad, from the dispositions or motives which produce or pervade it. Mere acts of the understanding are neither right nor wrong. When I speak of faith as a holy or virtuous principle, I extend the term beyond its primitive meaning, and include in it not merely the assent of the intellect, but the disposition or temper by which this assent is determined, and which it is suited to confirm; and I attach as broad a signification to unbelief, when I pronounce it a crime. The truth is, that the human mind, though divided by our philosophy into many distinct capacities, seldom or never exerts them separately, but generally blends them in one act. Thus, in forming a judgment, it exerts the will and affections, or the moral principles of our nature, as really as the power of thought. Men's passions and interests mix with, and are expressed in, the decisions of the intellect. In the Scriptures, which use language freely, and not with philosophical strictness, faith and unbelief are mental acts of this complex character, or joint products of the understanding and heart; and on this account alone, they are objects of approbation or reproof. In these views, I presume, reflecting Christians of every name agree.

According to these views, opinions cannot be laid down as unerring and immutable signs of virtue and vice. The very same opinion may be virtuous in one man and vicious in another, supposing it, as is very possible, to have originated in different states of mind. For example, if through envy and malignity I should rashly seize on the slightest proofs of guilt in my neighbour, my judgment of his criminality would be morally wrong. Let another man arrive at the same conclusion, in consequence of impartial inquiry and love of truth, and his decision would be morally right. Still more; according to these views, it is possible for the belief of Christianity to be as criminal as unbelief. Undoubtedly the reception of a system so pure in spirit and tendency as the Gospel, is to be regarded in general as a favourable sign. But let a man adopt this

religion, because it will serve his interest and popularity—let him shut his mind against objections to it, lest they should shake his faith in a gainful system—let him tamper with his intellect, and, for base and selfish ends, exhaust its strength in defence of the prevalent faith,—and he would be just as criminal in believing, as another would be in rejecting Christianity, under the same bad impulses. Our religion is, at this moment, adopted and passionately defended by vast multitudes, on the ground of the very same pride, worldliness, love of popularity, and blind devotion to hereditary prejudices, which led the Jews and Heathens to reject it in the primitive age; and the faith of the first is as wanting in virtue, as was the infidelity of the last.

To judge of the character of faith and unbelief, we must examine the times and circumstances in which they exist. At the first preaching of the Gospel, to believe in Christ was a strong proof of an upright mind; to enlist among his followers, was to forsake ease, honour, and worldly success, to confess him was an act of signal loyalty to truth, virtue, and God. To believe in Christ at the present moment, has no such significance. To confess him, argues no moral courage. It may even betray a servility and worldliness of mind. These remarks apply in their spirit to unbelief. At different periods and in different conditions of society, unbelief may express very different states of mind. Before we pronounce it a crime and doom it to perdition, we ought to know the circumstances under which it has sprung up, and to inquire with candour whether they afford no palliation or defence. When Jesus Christ was on earth, when his miracles were wrought before men's eyes, when his voice sounded in their ears, when not a shade of doubt could be thrown over the reality of his supernatural works, and not a human corruption had mingled with his doctrine, there was the strongest presumption against the uprightness and the love of truth of those who rejected him. He knew, too, the hearts and the lives of those who surrounded him, and saw distinctly in their envy, ambition, worldliness, sensuality, the springs of their unbelief; and accordingly he pronounced it a crime. Since that period what changes have taken place! Jesus Christ has left the world. His miracles are events of a remote age, and the proofs of them, though abundant, are to many imperfectly known;

and what is incomparably more important, his religion has undergone corruption, adulteration, disastrous change, and its likeness to its Founder is in no small degree effaced. The clear consistent quickening truth which came from the lips of Jesus, has been exchanged for a hoarse jargon and vain babblings. The stream so pure at the fountain, has been polluted and poisoned through its whole course. Not only has Christianity been overwhelmed by absurdities, but by impious doctrines which have made the Universal Father, now a weak and vain despot, to be propitiated by forms and flatteries, and now an almighty torturer, fore-ordaining multitudes of his creatures to guilt, and then glorifying his justice by their everlasting woe. When I think what Christianity has become in the hands of politicians and priests, how it has been shaped into a weapon of power, how it has crushed the human soul for ages, how it has struck the intellect with palsy, and haunted the imagination with superstitious phantoms, how it has broken whole nations to the yoke, and frowned on every free thought; when I think how, under almost every form of this religion, its ministers have taken it into their own keeping, have hewn and compressed it into the shape of rigid creeds, and have then pursued by menaces of everlasting woe, whoever would question the divinity of these works of their hands; when I consider, in a word, how under such influences, Christianity has been and still is exhibited in forms which shock alike the reason, conscience, and heart, I feel deeply, painfully, what a different system it is from that which Jesus taught; and I dare not apply to unbelief the terms of condemnation, which belonged to the infidelity of the primitive age.

Perhaps I ought to go farther. Perhaps I ought to say, that to reject Christianity under some of its corruptions, is rather a virtue than a crime. At the present moment, I would ask, whether it is a vice to doubt the truth of Christianity as it is manifested in Spain and Portugal? When a patriot in those benighted countries, who knows Christianity only as a bulwark of despotism, as a rearer of inquisitions, as a stern jailor immuring wretched women in the convent, as an executioner stained and reeking with the blood of the friends of freedom; I say, when the patriot, who sees in our religion the instrument of these crimes and woes, believes and affirms that it is not from God, are we authorised to charge his un-

belief on dishonesty and corruption of mind, and to brand him as a culprit? May it not be, that the spirit of Christianity in his heart, emboldens him to protest with his lips against what bears the name? And if he thus protest, through a deep sympathy with the oppression and sufferings of his race, is he not nearer the kingdom of God than the priest and inquisitor who boastingly and exclusively assume the Christian name? Jesus Christ has told us, that "this is the condemnation" of the unbelieving, "that they love darkness rather than light;" and who does not see that this ground of condemnation is removed; just in proportion as the light is quenched, or Christian truth is buried in darkness and debasing error?

I know I shall be told, that a man in the circumstances now supposed, would still be culpable for his unbelief, because the Scriptures are within his reach, and these are sufficient to guide him to the true doctrines of Christ. But in the countries of which I have spoken, the Scriptures are not common; and if they were, I apprehend that we should task human strength too severely, in requiring it under every possible disadvantage, to gain the truth from this source alone. A man born and brought up in the thickest darkness, and amidst the grossest corruptions of Christianity, accustomed to hear the Scriptures disparaged, accustomed to connect false ideas with their principal terms, and wanting our most common helps of criticism, can hardly be expected to detach from the mass of error which bears the name of the gospel, the simple principles of the primitive faith. Let us not exact too much of our fellow-creatures. In our zeal for Christianity, let us not forget its spirit of equity and mercy.

In these remarks, I have taken an extreme case. I have supposed a man subjected to the greatest disadvantages, in regard to the knowledge of Christianity. But obstacles less serious, may exculpate the unbeliever. In truth, none of us can draw the line which separates between innocence and guilt, in this particular. To measure the responsibility of a man who doubts or denies Christianity, we must know the history of his mind, his capacity of judgment, the early influences and prejudices to which he was exposed, the forms under which the religion and its proofs first fixed his thoughts, and the opportunities since enjoyed of eradicating errors, which struck root before the power of trying them was unfolded. We are not

his judges. At another and an unerring tribunal, he must give account.

I cannot then join in the common cry against infidelity, as the sure mark of a corrupt mind. That unbelief often has its origin in evil dispositions, I cannot doubt. The character of the unbeliever often forces us to acknowledge, that he rejects Christianity to escape its rebukes—that its purity is its chief offence—that he seeks infidelity as a refuge from fear and virtuous restraint. But to impute these unholy motives to a man of pure life, is to judge rashly, and it may be, unrighteously. I cannot look upon unbelief as essentially and unfailingly a crime. But I do look upon it as among the greatest of calamities. It is the loss of the chief aid of virtue; of the mightiest power over temptation, of the most quickening knowledge of God, of the only unfailing light, of the only sure hope. The unbeliever would gain unspeakably by parting with every possession, for the truth which he doubts or rejects. And how shall we win him to the faith? Not by reproach, by scorn, by tones of superiority; but by paying due respect to his understanding, his virtues, and his right of private judgment, by setting before him Christianity in its simple majesty, its reasonableness and wonderful adaptation to the wants of our spiritual nature; by exhibiting its proofs without exaggeration, yet in their full strength, and, above all, by showing in our own characters and lives, that there is in Christianity a power to purify, elevate, and console, which can be found in no human teaching. These are the true instruments of conversion. The ignorant and superstitious may indeed be driven into a religion, by menace and reproach. But the reflecting unbeliever cannot but distrust a cause which admits such weapons. He must be reasoned with, as a man, an equal, and a brother. Perhaps we may silence him for a time, by spreading through the community a fanatical excitement, and a persecuting hatred of infidelity. But as by such processes Christianity would be made to take a more unlevelly and irrational form, its secret foes would be multiplied, its brightest evidence would be dimmed, its foundation sapped, its energy impaired, and whenever the time should arrive for throwing off the mask, and that time would come, we should learn that in the very ranks of its nominal disciples, there had been trained a host of foes who would burn to prostrate the intolerant faith, which had so long sealed

their lips, and trampled on the rights and freedom of the human mind.

According to these views, I do not condemn the unbeliever, unless he bear witness against himself by an immoral and irreligious life. It is not given me to search his heart. But this power is given to himself, and as a friend I call upon him to exert it; I ask him to look honestly into his own mind, to question his past life, and to pronounce impartial sentence on the causes of his unbelief. Let him ask himself whether he has inquired into the principles and proofs of Christianity deliberately, and in the love of truth—whether the desire to discover and fulfil his duties to God and his fellow-creatures, has governed his examination—whether he has surrendered himself to no passions or pursuits, which religion and conscience rebuke, and which bar the mind and sear the heart against the truth. If, thus self-questioned, his heart acquit him, let no man condemn him, and let him heed no man's condemnation. But if conscience bear witness against him, he has cause to suspect and dread his unbelief. He has reason to fear, that it is the fruit of a depraved mind, and that it will ripen and confirm the depravity from which it sprung.

I know that there are those, who will construe what they call my lenity towards unbelief, into treachery towards Christianity. There are those who think, that unless scepticism be ranked among the worst crimes, and the infidel be marked out for abhorrence and dread, the multitude of men will lose their hold on the gospel. An opinion, more discreditable to Christianity cannot easily be advanced by its friends. It virtually admits that the proofs of our religion, unless examined under the influence of terror, cannot work conviction; that the gospel cannot be left like other subjects, to the calm and unbiassed judgment of mankind. It discovers a distrust of Christianity, with which I have no sympathy. And here I would remark, that the worst abuses of our religion have sprung from this cowardly want of confidence in its power. Its friends have feared, that it could not stand without a variety of artificial buttresses. They have imagined, that men must now be bribed into faith, by annexing to it temporal privileges, now driven into it by menaces and inquisitions, now attracted by gorgeous forms, now awed by mysteries and superstitions; in a word, that the multitude must be imposed upon, or the

religion will fall. I have no such distrust of Christianity; I believe in its invincible powers. It is founded in our nature. It meets our deepest wants. Its proofs as well as principles are adapted to the common understandings of men, and need not to be aided by appeals to fear or any other passion which would discourage inquiry or disturb the judgment. I fear nothing for Christianity, if left to speak in its own tones, to approach men with its unveiled, benignant countenance. I do fear much from the weapons of policy and intimidation, which are framed to uphold the imagined weakness of Christian truth.

I now come to the great object of this discourse, an exhibition of the proofs of Christianity; and I begin with a topic which is needed to prepare some, if not many, to estimate these proofs fairly and according to their true weight. I begin with the position, That there is nothing in the general idea of Revelation at which Reason ought to take offence, nothing inconsistent with any established truth, or with our best views of God and nature. This topic meets a prejudice not very rare. I repeat it then: Revelation is nothing incredible—nothing which carries contradiction on its face—nothing at war with any great principles of reason or experience. On hearing of God's teaching us by some other means than the fixed order of nature, we ought not to be surprised, nor ought the suggestion to awaken resistance in our minds.

Revelation is not at war with nature. From the necessity of the case, the earliest instruction must have come to human beings from this source. If our race had a beginning (and nothing but the insanity of Atheism can doubt this), then its first members created as they were without human parentage, and having no resource in the experience of fellow-creatures who had preceded them, required an immediate teaching from their Creator; they would have perished without it. Revelation was the very commencement of human history, the foundation of all later knowledge and improvement. It was an essential part of the course of Providence, and must not then be regarded as a discord in God's general system.

Revelation is not at war with nature. Nature prompts us to expect it from the relation which God bears to the human race. The relation of Creator, is the most intimate which can subsist, and it leads us to anticipate a free and affectionate intercourse with the creature. That the

Universal Father should be bound by a parental interest to his offspring, that he should watch over and assist the progress of beings whom he has enriched with the divine gifts of reason and conscience, is so natural a doctrine, so accordant with his character, that various sects, both philosophical and religious, both anterior and subsequent to Christianity, have believed, not only in general revelation, but that God reveals himself to every human soul. When I think of the vast capacities of the human mind, of God's nearness to it, and unbounded love towards it, I am disposed to wonder, not that revelations have been made, but that they have not been more variously vouchsafed to the wants of mankind.

Revelation has a striking agreement with the chief method which God has instituted for carrying forward individuals and the race, and is thus in harmony with his ordinary operations. Whence is it that we all acquire our chief knowledge? Not from the outward universe, not from the fixed laws of material nature, but from intelligent beings more advanced than ourselves. The teachings of the wise and good are our chief aids. Were our connexion with superior minds broken off, had we no teacher but nature with its fixed laws, its unvaried revolutions of day and night and seasons, we should remain for ever in the ignorance of childhood. Nature is a volume which we can read only by the help of an intelligent interpreter. The great law under which man is placed, is, that he shall receive illumination and impulse from beings more improved than himself. Now, revelation is only an extension of this universal method of carrying forward mankind. In this case, God takes on himself the office to which all rational beings are called. He becomes an immediate teacher to a few, communicating to them a higher order of truths than had before been attained, which they in turn are to teach to their race. Here is no new power or element introduced into the system, but simply an enlargement of that agency, on which the progress of man chiefly depends.

Let me next ask you to consider, why or for what end God has ordained as the chief means of human improvement, the communication of light from superior to inferior minds? and if it shall then appear, that revelation is strikingly adapted to promote a similar though more important end, you will have another mark of agree-

ment between revelation and his ordinary providence. Why is it that God has made men's progress dependant on instruction from their fellow-beings? Why are the more advanced commissioned to teach the less informed? A great purpose, I believe the chief purpose, is to establish interesting relations among men, to bind them to one another by generous sentiments, to promote affectionate intercourse, to call forth a purer love than could spring from a communication of mere outward gifts. Now it is rational to believe, that the Creator designs to bind his creatures to himself as truly as to one another, and to awaken towards himself even stronger gratitude, confidence, and love, for these sentiments towards God are more happy and ennobling, than towards any other being; and it is plain, that revelation or immediate divine teaching, serves as effectually to establish these ties between God and man, as human teaching to attach men to one another. We see then in revelation, an end corresponding to what the Supreme Being adopts in his common providence. That the end here affirmed is worthy of his interposition, who can doubt? His benevolence can propose no higher purpose than that of raising the minds and hearts of his creatures to himself. His parental character is a pledge that he must intend this ineffable happiness for his rational offspring, and revelation is suited to this end, not only by unfolding new doctrines in relation to God, but by the touching proof which it carries in itself of the special interest which he takes in his human family. There is plainly an expression of deeper concern, a more affectionate character in this mode of instruction, than in teaching us by the fixed order of nature. Revelation is God speaking to us in our own language, in the accents which human friendship employs. It shows a love, breaking through the reserve and distance which we all feel to belong to the method of teaching us by his works alone. It fastens our minds on him. We can look on nature, and not think of the Being whose glory it declares, but God is indissolubly connected with and indeed is a part of the idea of revelation. How much nearer does this direct intercourse bring him to the mass of mankind! On this account revelation would seem to me important, were it simply to repeat the teachings of nature. This reiteration of great truths in a less formal style, in kinder, more familiar tones, is peculiarly fitted to awaken the soul to

the presence and benignity of its heavenly Parent. I see, then, in revelation a purpose corresponding with that for which human teaching was instituted. Both are designed to bring together the teacher and the taught in pure affection.

Let me next ask you to consider, what is the kind of instruction which the higher minds among men are chiefly called to impart to the inferior. You will here see another agreement between revelation and that ordinary human teaching, which is the great instrument of improving the race. What kind of instruction is it which parents—which the aged and experienced are most anxious to give to the young, and on which the safety of this class mainly depends? It is instruction in relation to the future, to their adult years, such as is suited to prepare them for the life that is opening before them. It is God's will when he gives us birth, that we should be forewarned of the future stages of our being, of approaching manhood or womanhood, of the scenes, duties, labours, through which we are to pass; and for this end he connects us with beings who have traversed the paths on which we are entering, and whose duty it is to train us for a more advanced age. Instruction in regard to futurity is the great means of improvement. Now the Christian revelation has for its aim to teach us on this very subject, to disclose the life which is before us, and to fit us for it. A future state is its constant burden. That God should give us light in regard to that state, if he design us for it, is what we should expect from his solicitude to teach us in regard to what is future in our earthly existence. Nature thirsts for, and analogy almost promises some illumination on the subject of human destiny. This topic I shall insist on more largely hereafter. I wish now simply to show you the agreement of revelation in this particular with the ordinary providence of God.

I proceed to another order of reflections, which to my own mind is particularly suited to meet the vague idea that revelation is at war with nature. To judge of nature we should look at its highest ranks of beings. We should inquire of the human soul, which we all feel to be a higher existence than matter. Now I maintain that there are in the human soul, wants, deep wants, which are not met by the influences and teachings which the ordinary course of things affords. I am aware that this is a topic to provoke distrust, if not derision in the low minded and sensual,

but I speak what I do know; and nothing moves me so little as the scoffs of men who despise their own nature. One of the most striking views of human nature, is the disproportion between what it conceives and thirsts for, and what it finds or can secure in the range of the present state. It is prone to stretch beyond its present bounds. Ideas of excellence and happiness spring up which it cannot realize now. It carries within itself a standard of which it daily and hourly falls short. This self-contradiction is the source of many sharp pains. There is in most men a dim consciousness, at least, of being made for something higher than they have gained, a feeling of internal discord, a want of some stable good, a disappointment in merely outward acquisitions; and in proportion as these convictions and wants become distinct, they break out in desires of illumination and aids from God, not found in nature. I am aware that the wants of which I have spoken, are but faintly developed in the majority of men. Accustomed to give their thoughts and strength to the outward world, multitudes do not penetrate, and cannot interpret their own souls. They impute to outward causes the miseries which spring from an internal fountain. They do not detain, and are scarcely conscious of the better thoughts and feelings which sometimes dart through their minds. Still there are few, who are not sometimes dissatisfied with themselves, who do not feel the wrong which they have done to themselves, and who do not desire a purer and nobler state of mind. The suddenness with which the multitude are thrilled by the voice of fervent eloquence, when it speaks to them of the spiritual world in tones of reality, shows the deep wants of human nature, even amidst ignorance and degradation. But all men do not give themselves wholly to outward things. There are those, and not a few, who are more true to their nature, and ought therefore to be regarded as its more faithful representatives, and in such, the wants of which I have spoken are unfolded with energy. There are those who feel painfully the weight of their present imperfection, who are fired by rare examples of magnanimity and devotion, who desire nothing so intensely as power over temptation, as elevation above selfish passions, as conformity of will to the inward law of duty, as the peace of conscious rectitude and religious trust; who would rejoice to lay down the present life for that spotless bright disinterested virtue, of

which they have the type or germ in their own minds. Such men can find no resource but in God, and are prepared to welcome a revelation of his merciful purposes, as an unspeakable gift. I say that the human mind has wants which nature does not answer. And these are not accidental feelings, unaccountable caprices, but are deep, enduring, and reproduced in all ages under one or another form. They breathe through the works of genius, they burn in the loftiest souls. Here are principles implanted by God in the highest order of his creatures on earth, to which revelation is adapted, and I say then that revelation is any thing but hostility to nature.

I will offer but one more view in illustration of this topic. I ask you to consider, on what principle of human nature the Christian revelation is intended to bear and to exert influence; and then to inquire, whether the peculiar importance of this principle be not a foundation for peculiar interposition in its behalf. If so, revelation may be said to be a demand of the human soul, and its imagined incongruity with nature will disappear. For what principle or faculty of the mind then was Christianity intended? It was plainly not given to enrich the intellect by teaching philosophy, or to perfect the imagination and taste by furnishing sublime and beautiful models of composition. It was not meant to give sagacity in public life, or skill and invention in common affairs. It was undoubtedly designed to develope all these faculties, but secondarily, and through its influence on a higher principle. It addresses itself primarily, and is especially adapted to the moral power in man. It regards and is designed for man as a moral being, endued with conscience or the principle of duty, who is capable of that peculiar form of excellence which we call righteousness or virtue, and exposed to that peculiar evil, guilt. Now the question offers itself, Why does God employ such extraordinary means for promoting virtue rather than science, for aiding conscience rather than intellect, and our other powers? Is there a foundation in the moral principle for peculiar interpositions in its behalf? I affirm that there is. I affirm that a broad distinction exists between our moral nature and our other capacities. Conscience is the supreme power within us. Its essence, its grand characteristic, is sovereignty. It speaks with a divine authority. Its office is to command, to rebuke, to reward; and happiness

and honour depend on the reverence with which we listen to it. All our other powers become useless, and worse than useless, unless controlled by the principle of duty. Virtue is the supreme good, the supreme beauty, the divinest of God's gifts, the health and harmonious unfolding of the soul, and the germ of immortality. It is worth every sacrifice, and has power to transmute sacrifices and sufferings into crowns of glory and rejoicing. Sin, vice, is an evil of its own kind, and not to be confounded with any other. Who does not feel at once the broad distinction between misfortune and crime, between disease of body and turpitude of soul? Sin, vice, is at war with the highest power in our own breasts and in the universe. It makes a being odious to himself, and arms against him the principle of rectitude in God, and in all pure beings. It poisons or dries up the fountains of enjoyment, and adds unspeakable weight to the necessary pains of life. It is not a foreign evil, but a blight and curse in the very centre of our being. Its natural associates are fear, shame, and self-torture; and whilst it robs the present of consolation, it leaves the future without hope. Now I say, that in this peculiar ruin wrought by moral evil, and in this peculiar worth of moral goodness, we see reasons for special interpositions of God in behalf of virtue, in resistance of sin. It becomes the infinite Father to manifest peculiar interest in the moral condition and wants of his creatures. Their great and continued corruption, is an occasion for peculiar methods of relief; and a revelation given to restore them and carry them forward to perfection, has an end which justifies if it does not demand this signal expression of parental love.

The preceding views have been offered, not as sufficient to prove that a revelation has been given, but for the purpose of removing the vague notion that it is at war with nature, and of showing its consistency with the spirit and principles of the Divine administration.

(To be Continued in our next.)

REVIEW.—*Illustrations of Political Economy*, No. 13.
The Charmed Sea; A Tale, by Harriet Martineau.
 Charles Fox, London.

IN this beautiful tale, Miss Martineau has struck upon a chord to which many an honest heart will vibrate. It is

a tale of the wrongs of Poland—of the sufferings of a band of Polish exiles on the shores of the Lake Baikal, the “Charmed Sea,” amid the deserts of Siberia, to which they had been consigned by the brutal oppressor of their country, the demon of the north. This tale will be a great service to the cause of humanity: many who would have turned from a more cold and argumentative discussion of the injuries of Poland, will be allured by the name of Martineau, and have their sympathies excited for that ill-fated people, when they find their wrongs thus married to the beautiful and touching “Illustrations” of one of the most successful of her tales.

We heartily thank the accomplished writer for this eloquent pleading in favour of the most injured of nations—may it “whet the almost blunted purpose” of the friends of Poland, and fall with a refreshing and invigorating influence upon the energies of the national humanity. Genius is indeed one of the noblest gifts of heaven to man; but when it is consecrated to the purest and noblest of objects, then indeed it proclaims itself to be an emanation of the all-beauteous Mind, and radiates a lustre around itself, pure, bright, and eternal. We have been so delighted with this tale on account of its subject, as well as its execution—its touching a note to which there is so long a response in our heart, that we have almost overlooked the scientific illustrations, with which, as usual, it abounds. The branch of her great theme which the writer illustrates in the present number, is the qualifications and conditions of a medium of exchange, or sign of value; and it is not saying too much when we state, that this recondite and difficult subject is illustrated with her usual success. We cannot resist laying before our readers the following exquisitely graphic and beautiful description of the “Charmed Sea,” at the shores of which the weary exiles had at last arrived:—

It was a relief to all when they at length arrived at their halting-place, on the banks of that extraordinary lake on which no stranger can look without being awed or charmed. As the procession emerged from a rocky pass, upon the very brink of the waters, the peasants carelessly took off their caps, and immediately resumed them, being too much accustomed to the prospect before them to be much affected by it, except when their terrors were excited by storms, or by any other of the phenomena of the charmed sea which they were wont to ascribe to the presence of spirits. Now, this vast lake, extending to the length of 300 miles, and more than 40 miles broad, lay dark in the bosom of the surrounding mountains, except where a gleam of grey light fell here and there from their openings upon its motionless surface. Not a move-

ment was seen through the whole circuit of the vast panorama, and not a sound was heard. If there were bears in the stunted pine-woods on the mountain side, or aquatic birds on the opposite margin, or eagles among the piled rocks that jutted into the waves, they were now hidden and still. If there were ever boats plying on the lake, they were now withdrawn into the coves and creeks of the shore. If there were human beings whose superstition was not too strong to permit them to live beside the very haunt of the invisible powers, their courage upheld them only while the sun was above the horizon. As soon as the shadows of twilight began to settle down, they hastened homewards, and avoided looking abroad till they heard the inferior animals moving, in sign, as it was supposed, of the spirits having retired. Neither man, woman, nor child was to be seen, therefore, at this moment, and it was difficult to imagine any, so perfect a solitude did the place appear. As soon as the peasants perceived this, they began to quake, and gathered round the Russian, with whispered entreaties to be allowed to return homewards instantly. This being angrily refused till a shelter should have been found for the whole party, the poor creatures, divided between their fear of an officer of the Emperor and of invisible spirits, prepared themselves for a somewhat unusual method of march. They took off their caps again, crossed themselves every moment, and walked with their backs to the lake, carefully shunning any appearance of a glance over either shoulder. Their consternation was at its height when their prisoners broke the silence by singing as before,—

“Our Poland mourns,—
She shall not die!
Her watch-fire burns,
And help is nigh.

Her ruffled eagle speeds from shore to shore,
Till nations rise to bid her weep no more.”

Before the last echo had died away, a gurgling rushing sound came from a distance, and those who gazed upon the expanse of waters, saw a prodigious swell approaching from the north-east, and rolling majestically towards them, slowly enough to afford the strange spectacle of half the lake in a state of storm, and the other half as smooth as glass. Presently, the whole was surging, tossing, foaming, roaring, while not a breath of air was at first felt by those on the shore. Next followed a flapping of wings overhead, for the eagles were roused; and a prodigious cackling and hurry-scurry in the marshes on either hand, for the wild-fowl were alarmed; and a crashing of boughs among the firs in the background, whether by a rising wind, or by wild beasts, could not be known. Then the clouds were parted, and the stars seemed to scud behind them; the fogs were swept away in puffs, and the opposite shores appeared to advance or recede, according to the comparative clearness of the medium through which they were seen.

On these wild shores then the exiles are located, some as crown peasants, others as labourers in the silver mines hard by; and their sufferings and adventures there, are the simple materials of this tale, and the media through which the “Illustrations” are conveyed. On these we shall not dwell, nor can we afford to extract the savage magnificence of the snow-storm in the fourth chapter, but we must quote the following passages:—

Thus he lingered this night, and was therefore the last of the little company appointed to assemble at their midnight altar. This altar was one of the mysterious sculptured or inscribed rocks which appear at rare

intervals in these deserts, the records, it is supposed, of ancient superstitions. The one chosen by the Poles for their point of rendezvous, bore figures of animals rudely carved on a misshapen pedestal; and on a natural pillar which sprang from it were characters which no one within the memory of man had been found able to read. From this pedestal, the snow was duly swept before the exiles gathered round it to sing their patriotic hymns, or celebrate worship according to the customs of their country; and little Clara engaged that when the snow was gone, no creeping mosses should be allowed to deform the face of the altar. As for living things, they were too scarce and too welcome to be considered unclean, and the wild pigeons were as welcome to perch on this resting-place after a weary flight over the Charmed Sea, as the swallow to build in the tabernacle of old. It was on the verge of the steep, where it plunged abrupt and fathoms deep into the green waters, that this altar stood; a conspicuous point which would have been dangerous but for the superstitions of all who lived within sight, since the blaze of the exiles' fire gleamed like a beacon on the height, and flickered among the pine stems behind, and shone from the polished black ice beneath.

As Ernest approached, unperceived, he first drew near to Sophia, who sat with folded arms on the verge of the rock, watching the white gleams of the northern lights, which shot up into the midheaven from behind the ridge of the opposite mountains, dimming the stars in that quarter, and contrasting strongly with the red glow of the fire which behind sent up wreaths of dim smoke among the rocks. Sophia's mood was less quiet than it should have been to accord with the scenery she was apparently contemplating. Neither superstition, nor any other influence seemed to have the power of soothing her. She was speaking, from time to time, in a querulous or an indifferent tone to some one who leaned against the altar on its shadowy side. It was Taddeus's voice which was heard occasionally in reply. The other Poles were collected round the fire; and their own voices, and the crackling and snapping of the burning wood, prevented their hearing that which it grieved Ernest's heart to listen to.

So saying, the two friends summoned their companions, and there, in a few moments, might be heard the mingled voices, ringing clear from the steep through the still midnight air, as they chanted their prayer:—

God!—Scorched by battle-fires we stand
Before thee on thy throne of snows;
But, Father! in this silent land,
We seek no refuge nor repose:
We ask, and shall not ask in vain,—
“Give us our heritage again!”

Thy winds are ice-bound in the sea;
Thine eagle cowers till storms are past;
Lord! when those moaning winds are free,
When eagles mount upon the blast,
Oh! breathe upon our icy chain,
And float our Poland's flag again!

'Twas for thy cause we once were strong;
Thou wilt not doom that cause to death!
O God! our struggle has been long;
Thou wilt not quench our glimmering faith!
Thou hear'st the murmurs of our pain,—
“Give us our heritage again!”

This beautiful hymn has been set to music by another kindred spirit. May its melody re-echo through the

nations, till a feeling be aroused which shall demand the emancipation of Poland's injured children, and teach not alone the Oppressor of the North, but all earth's despots, that humanity shall not be trampled to the dust for ever.

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, MARCH 1, 1833.

THE seventh Annual Examination of the children in the Sunday-school connected with the Unitarian Chapel, Stockton-upon-Tees, took place on Sunday, December 30, before the Rev. W. Duffield of Thorne, and the Congregation, and friends of the school. The children read and repeated various pieces prepared for the occasion, and answered with great propriety the questions put to them as to the meaning of what they had read. Specimens of their writing were also exhibited; and all present expressed themselves highly gratified with the whole proceedings.

On Monday the 31st, the children of the Sunday-school met in the Freemasons' Lodge, where tea had been prepared for them. Hymns were sung and addresses made, and all seemed happy. At six o'clock the same evening, about one hundred members of the Congregation assembled to tea, being admitted at sixpence each. The Rev. W. Duffield was called to the chair, and a highly interesting evening was passed in listening to addresses from the chairman, Rev. G. Heavyside of Rochdale, and Messrs. Bald, Richmond, Brown, Clephan, F. C. Richmond, Randyll, jun. Fallowes, Jackson, &c. Such meetings are indeed well calculated to produce Christian fellowship in all, where they are adopted. This is the fourth annual tea-party held at Stockton; the charge has never exceeded sixpence each person; that has been found sufficient to defray every expense; and it is much to be desired, that similar parties were more general in the Unitarian denomination, rather than dinner-parties, which necessarily exclude many individuals from participating in a rational and heartfelt enjoyment.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

OUR friends in various parts of England, are respectfully informed, that their communications for this Magazine, if sent to the care of MR. HUNTER, - ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, LONDON, *previously to the last day of every Month*, will reach the Editor in a few days afterwards.

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Vol. VII.

The Evidences of Christianity. By William Ellery Channing, D. D.

(Continued from page 248.)

I PROCEED now to consider the direct and positive proofs of Christianity, beginning with some remarks on the nature and sufficiency of the evidence on which it chiefly relies.

Christianity sprung up about eighteen hundred years ago. Of course its evidences are to be sought in history. We must go back to the time of its birth, and understand the condition in which it found the world, as well as the circumstances of its origin, progress, and establishment; and happily on these points, we have all the light necessary to a just judgment. We must not imagine that a religion which bears the date of so distant an age, must therefore be involved in obscurity. We know enough of the earliest times of Christianity to place the question of its truth within our reach. The past may be known as truly as the present, and I deem this principle so important in the present discussion, that I ask your attention to it.

The past, I have said, may be known; nor is this all, we derive from it our most important knowledge. Former times are our chief instructors. Our political as well as religious institutions, our laws, customs, modes of thinking, arts of life, have come down from earlier ages, and most of them are unintelligible without a light borrowed from history.

Not only are we able to know the nearest of past ages, or those which touch on our own times, but those which are remote. No educated man doubts any more of the victories of Alexander or Cæsar before Christ, than of Napoleon's conquests in our own day. So open is our communication with some ages of antiquity, so many are the records which they have transmitted, that we know them even better than nearer times; and a religion which grew up eighteen hundred years ago, may be more intelligible, and accompanied with more decisive proofs of truth or falsehood, than one which is not separated from us by a fourth part of that duration.

From the nature of things, we may and must know

much of the past, for the present has grown out of the past, is its legacy, fruit, representative, and is deeply impressed with it. Events do not expire at the moment of their occurrence. Nothing takes place without leaving traces behind it; and these are in many cases so distinct and various, as to leave not a doubt of their cause. We all understand how in the material world events testify of themselves to future ages. Should we visit an unknown region, and behold masses of lava covered with soil of different degrees of thickness, and surrounding a blackened crater, we should have as firm a persuasion of the occurrence of remote and successive volcanic eruptions, as if we had lived through the ages in which they took place. The chasms of the earth would report how terribly it had been shaken, and the awful might of long extinguished fires, would be written in desolations which ages had failed to efface. Now conquest and civil and religious revolutions leave equally their impressions on society, leave institutions, manners, and a variety of monuments which are inexplicable without them, and which taken together, admit not a doubt of their occurrence. The past stretches into the future, the present is crowded with it, and can be interpreted only by the light of history.

But besides these effects and remains of earlier times, we have other and more distinct memorials of the past, which, when joined with the former, place it clearly within our knowledge. I refer to books. A book is more than a monument of a preceding age. It is a voice coming to us over the interval of centuries. Language, when written, as truly conveys to us another's mind as when spoken. It is a species of personal intercourse. By it the wise of former times give us their minds, as really as if by some miracle they were to rise from the dead and communicate with us by speech.

From these remarks we learn, that Christianity is not placed beyond the reach of our investigations by the remoteness of its origin, and they are particularly applicable to the age in which the gospel was first given to the world. Our religion did not spring up before the date of authentic history. Its birth is not hidden in the obscurity of early and fabulous times. We have abundant means of access to its earliest stages; and what is very important, the deep and peculiar interest which Christianity has awakened, has fixed the earnest attention of the most learned and

sagacious men on the period of its original publication, so that no age of antiquity is so thoroughly understood. Christianity sprung up at a time when the literature and philosophy of Greece were spread far and wide, and had given a great impulse to the human mind; and when Rome, by unexampled conquests, had become a centre and bond of union to the civilized world, and to many half-civilized regions, and had established a degree of communication between distant countries before unknown. We are not then left to grope our way by an unsteady light. Our means of information are various and great. We have incontestible facts in relation to the origin of our religion, from which its truth may be easily deduced. A few of these facts which form the first steps of our reasoning on this subject, I will now lay before you.

1. First, then, we know with certainty the time when Christianity was founded. As to this fact, there is and can be no doubt. Heathen and Christian historians speak on this point with one voice. Christianity was first preached in the age of Tiberius. Not a trace of it exists before that period, and afterwards the marks and proofs of its existence are so obvious and acknowledged as to need no mention. Here is one important fact placed beyond doubt.

2. In the next place, we know the place where Christianity sprung up. No one can dispute the country of its birth. Its Jewish origin is not only testified by all history, but is stamped on its front, and woven into its frame. The language in which it is conveyed, carries us at once to Judea. Its name is derived from Jewish prophecy. None but Jews could have written the New Testament. So natural, undesigned, and perpetual are the references and allusions of the writers to the opinions and manners of that people, so accustomed are they to borrow from the same source the metaphors, similitudes, types, by which they illustrate their doctrines, that Christianity as to its outward form may be said to be steeped in Judaism. We have then another established fact. We know where it was born.

3. Again, we know the individual by whom Christianity was founded. We know its Author, and from the nature of the case this fact cannot but be known. The founder of a religion is naturally and necessarily the object of general inquiry. Wherever the new faith is carried, the first and most eager questions are, "From whom does it come? On whose authority does it rest?" Curiosity is

never more intense than in regard to the individual who claims a divine commission, and sends forth a new religion. He is the last man to be overlooked or mistaken. In the case of Christianity especially, its founder may be said to have been forced on men's notice, for his history forms an essential part of his religion. Christianity is not an abstract doctrine, which keeps its author out of sight. He is its very soul. It rests on him, and finds its best illustration in his life. The simple consideration that Christianity must have had an author; and that it has been always ascribed to Jesus, and to no one else, places the great fact which I would establish beyond doubt.

4. I next observe, that we not only know the founder of Christianity, but the ministers by whom he published and spread it through the world. A new religion must have propagators, first teachers; and with these it must become intimately associated. A community can no more be ignorant as to the teachers who converted it to a new faith, than as to the conqueror who subjected it to a new government; and where the art of writing is known and used for recording events, the latter fact will not more certainly be transmitted to posterity than the former. We have the testimony of all ages, that the men called Apostles were the first propagators of Christianity, nor have any others been named as sustaining this office; and it is impossible, that, on such a point, such testimony should be false.

5. Again, we know not only when, and where, and by whom Christianity was introduced—we know, from a great variety of sources, what, in the main, this religion was, as it came from the hands of its founder. To assure ourselves on this point, we need not recur to any sacred books. From the age following that of Christ and the Apostles, down to the present day, we have a series and an almost numberless host of writers on the subject of Christianity; and whilst we discover in them a great diversity of opinions and opposite interpretations of some of Christ's teachings, yet, on the whole, they so far agree in the great facts of his history, and in certain great principles of his religion, that we cannot mistake as to the general character of the system which he taught. There is not a shadow of reason for the opinion, that the original system which Jesus taught was lost; and a new one substituted and fastened on the world in his name. The

many and great corruptions of Christianity, did not and could not hide its principal features. The greatest corruptions took place in the century which followed the death of the Apostles, when certain wild and visionary sects endeavoured to establish a union between the new religion and the false philosophy to which they had been wedded in their heathen state. You may judge of their character and claims when I tell you, that they generally agreed in believing, that the God who made the world and who was worshipped by the Jews, was not the Supreme God, but an inferior and imperfect Deity, and that matter had existed from eternity, and was essentially and unchangeably evil. Yet these sects endeavoured to sustain themselves on the writings which the great body of Christians received and honoured as the works of the Apostles; and amidst their delusions, they recognised and taught the miracles of Christ, his resurrection, and the most important principles of his religion; so that the general nature of Christianity as it came from its Founder, may be ascertained beyond a doubt. Here another great point is fixed.

6. I have now stated to you several particulars relating to Christianity, which admit no doubt; and these indisputable facts are of great weight in a discussion of the Christian evidences. There is one point more of importance which cannot be settled so expeditiously as these. I hope however enough may be said to place it beyond doubt, without exceeding the limits of a discourse, and I invite to it your serious attention. I say then, that we not only know in general what Christianity was at its first promulgation, but we know precisely what its first propagators taught, for we have their writings. We have their religion under their own hands. We have particularly four narratives of the life, works, and words of their Master, which put us in possession of his most private, as well as public teaching. It is true, that without these writings we should still have strong arguments for the truth of Christianity, but we should be left in doubt as to some of its important principles; and its internal evidence, which corroborates, and as some think exceeds the external, would be very much impaired. The possession of the writings of the first propagators of the gospel, must plainly render us great aid in judging of its claims. These writings I say we have, and this point I would now establish.

I am aware that the question to which I now ask your attention, is generally confined to professed students. But it is one on which men of good sense are competent to judge, and its great importance gives it a claim to the serious consideration of every Christian.

The question is, whether the four Gospels are genuine, that is, whether they were written by those to whom they are ascribed? To answer it, let us consider how we determine the genuineness of books in general. I begin with the obvious remark, that to know the author of a work, it is not necessary that we should be eye-witnesses of its composition. Perhaps of the numberless publications of the present day, we have not seen one growing under the pen of the writer. By far the greater number come to us across the ocean, and yet we are as confident in regard to their authors, as if we had actually seen them first committed to paper. The ascription of a book to an individual, during his life, by those who are interested in him, and who have the best means of knowing the truth, removes all doubts as to its author. A strong and wide spread conviction of this kind must have a cause, and can only be explained by the actual production of the work by the reputed writer. It should here be remembered that there is a strong disposition in men, to ascertain the author of an important and interesting work. We have had a remarkable illustration of this in our own times. The author of *Waverley* saw fit to wrap himself for a time in mystery, and what was the consequence? No subject in politics or science was agitated more generally than the question to whom the work belonged. It was not only made a topic in almost every periodical publication, but one book was expressly written to solve the problem. The instance I know was remarkable, but this inquisitiveness in regard to books, is a principle of our nature, and is particularly active when the book in debate is a work of singular authority.

I have spoken of the confidence which we feel as to the authors of books published in our own times. But our certainty is not confined to these. Every reading man is as sure that Hume and Robertson wrote the histories which bear their names, as that Scott has in our own times sent out the *Life of Bonaparte*. Those eminent men were born more than a hundred years ago, and they died before the birth of most to whom I speak. But the communica-

tion between their times and our own is so open and various, that we know their literary labours, as well as those of the present day. Not a few persons now living have had intercourse with some of the contemporaries of these historians, and through this channel in particular, we of this generation have the freest access to the preceding, and know its convictions in regard to the authors of interesting books, as fully as if we had lived in it ourselves. That the next age will have the same communication with the present, as the present has with the past, and that these convictions of our predecessors will be transmitted by us to our immediate successors, you will easily comprehend; and you will thus learn the respect which is due to the testimony of the third generation on such a subject.

In what has now been said, we see with what confidence and certainty we determine the authors of writings published in our own age, or in the times nearest our own. These remarks may be easily applied to the productions of antiquity. When the question arises, whether an ancient book was written by the individual whose name it bears, we must inquire into the opinion of his contemporaries, or of those who succeeded his contemporaries so nearly, as to have intimate communication with them. The competency of these to a just judgment on the subject, we have seen, and if they have transmitted their convictions to us in undisputed writings, it ought to be decisive. On this testimony we ascribe many ancient books to their authors with the firmest faith, and in truth we receive as genuine many works of antiquity on far inferior proofs. There are many books of which no notice can be found for several ages after the time of their reputed authors. Still the fact, that as soon as they are named, they are ascribed undoubtingly and by general consent, to certain authors, is esteemed a sufficient reason for regarding them as their productions, unless some opposite proofs can be adduced. This general reception of a work as having come from a particular writer, is an effect which requires a cause, and the most natural and obvious explanation of his being named rather than any other man, is, that he actually composed it.

I now proceed to apply these principles to the four histories of Christ, commonly called Gospels. The question is, what testimony respecting their authors has come

down to us from the age of their reputed authors, or from times so near it, and so connected with it, as to be faithful representatives of its convictions. By this testimony, as we have seen, the genuineness of the books must be decided. And I begin with admitting, that no evidence on the subject is to be derived from contemporary writers. No author living in the age of the first propagators of Christianity has named the Gospels. The truth is, that no undisputed writings of their immediate converts have been preserved. A few tracts bearing the name of men acquainted with the Apostles have indeed come down to us, but so much uncertainty hangs over their origin, that I am unwilling to ground on them any reasoning. Nor ought we to wonder that the works of private Christians of the primitive age are wanting to us, for that was an age of persecution when men were called *to die* rather than *write* for their religion. I suppose, too, that during the times of the Apostles, little importance was attached to any books but such as were published, or authorised by these eminent men; and of course, what was written by others, was little circulated and soon passed away.

The undisputed writings of the early Christians begin about seventy years after the times of the Apostles. At that period, there probably remained none of the first converts or contemporaries of the Apostles. But there were living not a few who had been acquainted with the last survivors of that honoured generation. When the Apostles died, they must have left behind a multitude who had known them; and of these not a few must have continued many years, and must have had intercourse with the new generation which sprung up after the apostolic age. Now in the times of this generation, the series of Christian authors begins. Although, then, we have no productions of the apostolic age to bear witness to the Gospels, we have writings from the ages which immediately followed it, and which, from their connection with it, ought, as we have seen, to be regarded as most credible witnesses on such a subject. What, then, do these writings teach? I answer, their testimony is clear and full. We learn from them, not only that the Gospels existed in those times, but that they were widely diffused, that they were received as the writings of the men whose names they bear, and that they were regarded with a confidence and veneration yielded to no other books. They are quoted as books

given by their revered authors to the Christian community, to be public and enduring records of their religion; and they are spoken of as read in the assemblies which were held for the inculcation and extension of the faith. I ask you to weigh this testimony. It comes to us from times intimately connected with the first age. Had the Gospels been invented and first circulated among the generation which succeeded the Apostles, could that generation have received them as books known and honoured before their time, and as the most authoritative and precious records transmitted to them from their fathers and predecessors? The case may seem too plain to require explanation, but as many are unaccustomed to inquiries of this kind, I will offer an example. You well know that nearly a century ago, a great religious excitement was spread through this country, chiefly by the ministry of Whitfield. Suppose now that four books were at this moment to come forth, bearing the names of four of the most distinguished men of that period, of Whitfield, of the venerable Edwards, and of two others intimately associated with them in their religious labours; and suppose these books not only to furnish narratives of what then took place, but to contain principles and rules urged with all possible earnestness and authority on the disciples or admirers of these religious leaders. Do you think it possible that their followers of the present day, and the public, could be made to believe that these books had been published by their pretended authors, had been given as standards to a religious community, and had been handed down as venerated books, when no such works had been heard of before? This is but a faint illustration; for Whitfield and Edwards are names of little weight or authority, compared with what the Apostles possessed in the primitive church.

We have then strong and sufficient reasons for believing that the histories called Gospels were received in the times of the Apostles, as works of those whose names they bear; and were handed down as their's with veneration by their contemporaries. Will any say, that all this may be true; but that during the lives of the Apostles, books forged in their names may have obtained general currency? To this extravagant supposition, it would be sufficient to reply according to my previous remarks, that the general ascription of a book to an author during his life, is the ground

on which the genuineness of the most unquestioned works depends. But I would add, that this evidence is singularly conclusive in the present case. The original propagators of Christianity to whom the Gospels were ascribed, were from their office among the public men of their age. They must have travelled extensively. They must have been consulted by inhabitants of various countries on the subject of the new religion. They must have been objects of deep interest to the first converts. They lived in the world's eye. Their movements, visits, actions, words, and writings must have awakened attention. Books from their hands must have produced a great sensation. We cannot conceive a harder task than to impose writings forged in their name on Christians and Christian communities, thus intimately connected with them, and so alive to their efforts for the general cause. The opportunities of detecting the falsehood were abundant, and to imagine falsehood to prosper under such circumstances, argues a strange ignorance of literary history and of human nature.

Let me add, that the motives of the first Christians to ascertain distinctly, whether writings ascribed to the Apostles were truly theirs, were the strongest which can be conceived. I have mentioned in my previous remarks, the solicitude of the world to learn the author of *Waverley*. The motive was mere curiosity, and yet to what earnest inquiries were multitudes impelled. The name of the author was of little or no moment. The book was the same, its portraits equally vivid, its developments of the human heart equally true and powerful, whether the author were known or not. So it is with most works. Books of science, philosophy, morals, and polite literature, owe their importance and authority not to their writers, but to their contents. Now the four Gospels were different in this respect. They were not the same to the first converts, come from whom they might. If written by Apostles or their associates, they had an authority and sacredness which could belong to them on no other condition. They became books of laws to the Christian community, became binding on their consciences and lives. To suppose such books received blindly, and without inquiry by great numbers, who had all the means of ascertaining their true origin, is to suppose the first converts insane or idiots, a charge which I believe their worst enemies will not think

of urging against them, and which the vast superiority of their religious and moral system to all the philosophical systems of the times, abundantly disproves.

I have now finished what is called the historical or external evidence of the genuineness of the four Gospels, that is, the evidence drawn from their being received and revered as the writings of the Apostles, in the first and succeeding ages of Christianity. But before leaving this head, I would notice a difficulty which may press on some minds. I suppose that many of you have heard, that very early, probably about the beginning of the second century, writings were forged in the name of the Apostles, and some may ask, why the four Gospels may not belong to this description? The answer is, that the Gospels, as we have seen, were received and honoured by the great body of Christians in the first and succeeding ages of Christianity, as writings of the Apostles or their associates. The forgeries are known to be forgeries, because they were not so received, because they were held in no veneration, but were rejected as fictitious by the Christian community. Here is a broad line of distinction. It must not surprise us, that in the great excitement produced by the first publication and triumphs of Christianity, a variety of extravagant notions should spring up, and that attempts should be made to blend the new religion with established systems; and as the names of the first propagators of the Gospel were held in peculiar reverence, we cannot wonder that the leaders of sects should strive to attach an apostolic sanction to their opinions, by sending abroad partly true, and partly false accounts of the preaching of these eminent men. Whether these writings were sent forth as compositions of the Apostles, or only as records of their teaching made by their hearers, is a question open to debate, but as to their origin there can be little doubt. We can account for their existence, and for the degree of favour which they obtained. They were generally written to give authority to the dreams or speculations of some extravagant sects, to which they were very much confined, and with which most of them passed away. There is not a shadow of reason for confounding with these our Gospels, which were spread from the beginning through the Christian world, and were honoured and transmitted as the works of the venerated men by whose names they were called.

Having now given the historical argument in favour of the genuineness of the Gospels, that is, in favour of their being written by their reputed authors, I now add, that there are several presumptive and internal proofs of the same truth, which, taken alone, have great weight, and when connected with the preceding, form an amount of evidence not easily withstood.

It is a presumption in favour of the claims of an author, that the book ascribed to him has never been assigned to any other individual. Now I am not aware, that unbelief has in any age named any individual, to whom the Gospels may be traced, rather than to those whose names they bear. We are not called upon to choose between different writers. In common cases, this absence of rival claims is considered as decisive in favour of the reputed author, unless the books themselves give ground to suspect another hand. Why shall not this principle be applied to the Gospels, as well as to all other works?

Another presumption in favour of the belief that these histories were written by the first propagators of Christianity, arises from the consideration that such books were to be expected from them. It is hardly conceivable that the Apostles, whose zeal carried abroad their system through so many nations, and who lived in an age of reading and writing, should leave their doctrines to tradition, should neglect the ordinary precaution of embodying them in the only permanent form, the only one in which they could be accurately transmitted, and by which all other systems were preserved. It is reasonable to suppose that they wrote what they taught, and if so, it is hardly possible that their writings should be lost. Their accounts must have been received, and treasured up just as we know the Gospels were cherished, and hence arises a strong presumption in favour of the genuineness of these books.

Again, these books carry one strong mark of having been written in the time of the Apostles. They contain no traces of later times, nothing to indicate that the authors belonged to another age. Now to those of you who are acquainted with such subjects, it is hardly necessary to observe, how difficult it is for a writer to avoid betraying the period in which he lives; and the cause is very obvious. Every age has its peculiarities, has manners, events, feelings, words, phrases of its own, and a man brought up among these, falls so naturally under their in-

fluence, and incorporates them so fully with his own mind, that they break out and manifest themselves almost necessarily and without his consciousness, in his words and writings. The present makes an impression incomparably more vivid than the past, and, accordingly, traces of the real age of a writer may almost always be discovered by a critical eye, however anxious he may be to assume the style and character of a preceding age. Now the Gospels betray no marks of the feelings, manners, contentions, events, of a period later than that in which the Apostles lived; and when we consider, that, with the exception of Luke's history, they have all the appearance of having come from plain men, unused to composition, this argument applies to them with peculiar force. Under this head I might place before you the evidence of the genuineness of these books, derived from the language, dialect, idiom, in which they are written. You can easily understand that by these helps, the country and age of a writing may often be traced. It may be satisfactory to know, that the profoundest scholars see in the dialect and idiom of the Gospels, a precise accordance with what might be expected of Jews writing in the age of the Apostles.

Another internal proof, and one within the reach of all, may be gathered from the style and character of the evangelical narratives. They are written with the simplicity, minuteness, and ease which are the natural tones of truth, which belong to writers thoroughly acquainted with their subjects, and writing from reality. You discover in them nothing of the labour, caution, and indistinctness, which can scarcely be escaped by men who are assuming a character not their own, and aiming to impose on the world. There is a difference which we have all discerned and felt, though we cannot describe it, between an honest simple-hearted witness, who tells what he has seen or is intimately acquainted with, and the false witness who affects an intimate knowledge of events and individuals which are in whole or in part his own fabrication. Truth has a native frankness, an unaffected freedom, a style and air of its own, and never were narratives more strongly characterised by these than the Gospels. It is a striking circumstance in these books, that whilst the life and character which they portray are the most extraordinary in history, the style is the most artless. There is no straining for epithets or for elevation of language, to suit the dignity of

the great personage who is the subject. You hear plain men telling you what they know of a character which they venerated too much to think of adorning or extolling it. It is also worthy of remark, that the character of Jesus, though the most peculiar and exalted in history, though the last to be invented and the hardest to be sustained, is yet unfolded through a great variety of details and conditions with perfect unity and consistency. The strength of this proof can only be understood by those who are sufficiently acquainted with literary history, to appreciate the difficulty of accomplishing a consistent and successful forgery. Such consistency is, in the present case, an almost infallible test. Suppose four writers of a later age, to have leagued together in the scheme of personating the first propagators of Christianity, and of weaving in their name the history of their Master's life. Removed as these men would have been from the original, and having no model or type of his character in the elevation of their own minds, they must have pourtrayed him with an unsteady hand, must have marred their work with incongruous features, must have brought down their hero on some occasions to the ordinary views and feelings of men; and in particular, must have been warped in their selection and representation of incidents, by the private purpose which led them to this singular co-operation. That four writers, under such circumstances, should sustain throughout so peculiar and elevated a character as Jesus, and should harmonise with each other in the delineation, would be a prodigy which no genius however pre-eminent could achieve. I say, then, that the narratives bear strong internal marks of having been drawn from the living original, by those who had the best means of knowing his character and life.

So various, strong, sufficient are the proofs, that the four Gospels are the works of the first preachers of Christianity whose names they bear. I will only add, that the genuineness of few ancient books is supported by proofs equally strong. Most of the works which have come down to us from antiquity, and which are ascribed to their reputed writers with undoubting confidence, are so ascribed on evidence inferior to that on which the claims of the Evangelists rest. On this point, therefore, not a doubt should remain.

(To be Continued in our next.)

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*On the Moral Constitution and History of Man.*

## PART II.—CHAPTER II.

HAVING in the previous Chapter explained the substance of my views respecting the doctrine of atonement, so far as regards its moral influence and aspect, we return to our historical sketches. We may now remark, that one of the earliest, most general, and most enduring impediments to the clear understanding and cordial reception of the Christian doctrine, arose from a preference and adherence to the doctrine of atonement; not only in its legitimate form, but with various corrupt additions and mistakes.

The very idea of atonement necessarily supposes a distance between the parties, between God and his worshippers, and requires something in the shape of *priests* and *ceremonies* to conduct it. The Jewish Christians could not shake off this association of ideas, and therefore, although when they celebrated the Passover (and probably other rites and sacrifices), they “did it in remembrance of their Master” as he had taught them—that is, remembering that such things were only typical of him—still they could not conceive how they were to receive the benefit even of his atonement, without the usual tokens, ceremonies, and intercessions of the law. Hence they insisted, that unless Christians observed the law of Moses also, they could not be saved.

The Apostles, however, were instructed, and Paul especially, to oppose and to condemn this doctrine, as subversive of the very spirit of the Gospel; and their authority prevailed for the time. Perhaps the destruction of Jerusalem, and the total impossibility of practising such a system, contributed likewise to its discomfiture. But the spirit was not conquered when the form was abandoned. The very circumstance of the Apostles having been obliged in the controversy, to enlarge copiously upon the atonement of Christ, as having been perfect and sufficient without the aid of the Mosaic institutions—this circumstance led to the idea, of the atonement being absolutely the most prominent and essential part of Christianity. In proportion as this idea prevailed, it excited the desire for having the requisite adjuncts of *priests* and *ceremonies* in some shape or another.

When Christians of this character could no longer have

these things from the temple or the synagogue, they resolved to have something on the same model, under Christian names and dresses. The ministers of the Church, therefore, who were at first nothing but teachers and office-bearers, were gradually invested with the character of priests and intercessors. They became a privileged order, who, by virtue of some mysterious unction, hereditary to their successors in office, were alone authorised to intermeddle with sacred things, and to convey the benefits of the atonement through certain ceremonies or ordinances. These ceremonies came to be constantly increased in number and importance. They were celebrated with pomp and splendour on some occasions, or accompanied with fastings and similar privations at other times. The importance attached to the intercessions of the priests who conducted the ceremonies, was consequently increased, and the reverence paid to such especially as were distinguished for their severe penances, was excessive. Their prayers were eagerly sought after, not only when they were alive, but after they were dead; and a saving health was attributed to their very bones and other relics. Among these ceremonies, and in course of time, the eucharist was invested with the most imposing pomp and solemnity, and the highest virtues were ascribed to its participation; till at length it was exalted into an actual sacrifice or atonement, to be partaken of, and offered alone, by a consecrated priest and on a consecrated altar. All these things were done, indeed, still with a professed regard to Christ as the ultimate and chief object, in the same manner as the Judaising Christian had done; but the spirit and tendency of both were the same. That is to say, while the Judaising teachers and the ceremonial Christians alike professed to acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, and called him Lord, Lord, they departed entirely from the spirit of his doctrine, and substituted in its room obsolete ordinances, or new traditions and commandments of men's device. We do not mean, by this remark, to say, that the whole body of such nominal Christians were on this account to be regarded as apostates from Christianity. There were among them, as there were among the Judaising Christians in the apostolic ages, many who were sincerely attached to the genuine principles of Christianity, and were only led away through prejudice and infirmity into those legal observances; but the *tendency* of them, nevertheless, was sub-

versive of the Gospel so far as it prevailed, and in many cases it entirely cast into the shade the true Christian sentiments of piety and morality.

I have said, that the new institution of *ceremonies*, and consequently the privileges of *priests*, originated in the desire of mankind to have some *other assurance* that God would be merciful to them, than what he had provided at first by authorised atonements, and, ultimately, by the *direct doctrine* of Christ. The justness of this view will be further illustrated by a sketch of the rise and progress of some of those ceremonies, taken from the chapters of Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, which treat in each respective century on "rites and ceremonies."

"One cause of the multiplication of rites and ceremonies in the Christian Church (cent. ii.), may be deduced from the abuse of certain titles of the sacerdotal orders among the Jews. \* \* \* The bishops were called *chief-priests*, the elders *priests*, and the deacons *Levites*; and they claimed the same rank and station, the same rights and privileges that had been conferred with those titles upon the ministers of religion under the Mosaic dispensation. Hence the rise of *tithes*, *first fruits*, *splendid garments*, &c. In like manner, the comparison of the oblations (made by the people for the expenses of the Church) to sacrifices, produced a multitude of rites and ceremonies. \* \* \* The same thing led to the idea of at length considering the *eucharist* as a real *sacrifice*. \* \* \* The administration of baptism also (cent. iii.), was attended with many new ceremonies, and the remission of sins was supposed to be the immediate and happy fruits of it; and for this reason, many delayed their baptism till they thought themselves on their death-bed, that they might thus make *sure* of heaven. \* \* \* About this time, *fasting* came to be held in high esteem, and other mortifications. \* \* \* Also, stated times for prayers, frequently three times a-day, like the Jews at the third, sixth, and ninth hour. \* \* \* By this time (cent. iv.) it was observed by Augustine, 'that the yoke under which the Jews groaned, was more tolerable than that imposed upon many Christians in his day.' \* \* \* Among other things, festivals in honour of the martyrs were instituted, and their relics and carcases hunted after, for charms against evil spirits. \* \* \* But it would be tedious to recapitulate all the progress and diversity

of the superstitious rites of the dark ages. Their character may be finally illustrated by considering the termination of some of them. The *eucharist* was from the beginning the most fertile subject of their superstitious inventions, till the full conviction of its being a real *sacrifice*, led to the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, and of what they did not hesitate to call the *deified bread*, and which was literally worshipped with the most august ceremonies, and received with the most unhesitating confidence as an infallible atonement. (cent. xiii.) By this time, likewise, pilgrimages, especially at certain seasons, to the Churches of St. Paul and St. Peter at Rome, were promised a plenary remission of sins."

It is true, that the confession of sins, with sentiments of contrition and penitence, was enjoined upon all such occasions; and some good people, under all those fooleries, would be actuated by proper moral sentiments; but the mass of the people regarded every thing in its gross and literal sense, and the tendency of the system was to produce that effect, and even to contaminate the piety of the best disposed with an abject superstition. The same idea, the dissatisfaction or want of understanding in men's minds, concerning the benevolent and merciful character of God, led them to solicit the prayers and the intercession of dead saints, angels, and the Virgin Mary, &c.

Such results showed that the apprehensions of the Apostles, with regard to the tendency of the system, were well founded. The people, in consequence, lost sight of the legitimate view of the atonement, as a *token of assurance* to them that God was spontaneously merciful. They came to regard it as something which was necessary to *make him merciful*; and having once given way to this idea, the progressive addition of ceremonies and of intercessors went on, till the system was plunged into the deepest and grossest superstition. This was the natural effect of it, it being impossible to satisfy the minds of men with any measure of such inventions, when once they have abandoned the simple and clear idea of a merciful and benevolent Divinity. On the contrary, their terrors and their superstition increased, in exact proportion to the number and perplexity of their inventions. And thus, as an apostle said, "they returned to the weak and beggarly elements of the world in its rudest ages."

Now, all these evils were the consequence of Christians

ceasing to form their ideas of the Divine character, and of their own duty, from the moral doctrine of Christianity. There is no safety and no peace for man, but in and through it—and, therefore, every deviation from it, every tendency to forget it, should be watched with the utmost jealousy. The history of the Church, even after the Reformation, will confirm this remark; but for the present, we return to bring forward our review of the middle ages in other respects.

We have seen the disposition of professing Christians in the early ages, to lapse into the spirit of Judaism, and at last even into superstitions as bad as those of the heathen. It was primarily owing to the prevailing sentiments of mankind still remaining unfavourable to the doctrine of the Divine Goodness. They feared, but they could not love God, because they knew him not. They were alike ignorant of the laws of Nature and of Providence.

The next delusion by which the Church was led astray, was the result of those attempts by which men, in the progressive development of their faculties, endeavoured to penetrate into the secrets of nature and of Providence, by the mere dint of their imagination. The creation of the world, the origin of evil, the existence and interference of spiritual beings, the doctrine of a general Providence, its design and results, were topics which had begun to exercise the ingenuity of philosophers, in the Oriental, the Greek, and the Jewish schools. And they thought to sound the depth of those profound subjects by their fanciful theories.

When Christianity became known to these imaginative philosophers, the place which Christ occupied in the scheme and operation of Providence, appeared a remarkable subject to them, and necessary to be accounted for, according to their respective theories. It was not the office which he sustained, and the doctrines which he taught in this world, for the moral instruction and salvation of mankind or society, which excited their attention. Of that they had little or no idea. It was a supposed mysterious connexion which he had, and influence which he exercised over the invisible world, and the spiritual beings thereof, and who were thought to have an agency on the character and affairs of mankind. The world was supposed to have been made by some one or other of these

beings who were defective in intelligence or goodness, and hence the origin of evil. Others imagined the original plan to have been marred or opposed by some envious spirit.

(Part II.—Chap. II. to be concluded in our next.)

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*On the Importance of adhering to Acknowledged Principles in the Interpretation of the Scriptures.—No. 4.*

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FROM the view which has been taken of the frame and constitution of man at his first creation, and of the moral state and circumstances of our primitive parents, it will I trust appear that no change, either physical or moral, need be supposed to have taken place in their nature, in order to realise the consequences which followed. Adam had not yet “eaten of the tree of life” that he might “live for ever:” but being “taken out of the ground,” and continuing to be “dust,” it could require no miracle to effect his return to the state from whence he originated. This concluding and principal part of his sentence therefore amounts to no more, than that, as he had now proved himself to be a *morally* frail and offending creature, so, his *physical* frame and constitution being composed of the like fragile materials, he would undergo all the hardships and sufferings which are the natural attendants of such a state, till it should terminate in dissolution. But that we may the more clearly trace the nature and design of the divine procedure, in the punishments awarded to the respective culprits, it may be requisite to review the whole transaction.

Upon an inquiry into the affair, it appeared that the leading and principal offender was the serpent; that the woman, deceived by his specious representations, was betrayed into a breach of the known and acknowledged command of her Maker; and that the man, won by her example, had fallen into the same offence. It is evident that the sensible presence—the inquiries, of the Supreme Being, and his acquiescence in apparently attaching the largest share of guilt to the serpent, are accommodations to the capacities of those for whose immediate use this interview was designed. The narrative is very concise, and considerably more probably was said than is particularised, for the purpose of acquainting our primitive parents with the real sphere which the lowly reptile holds

in creation; that it was in truth incapable of giving birth to any such suggestions as those which they ascribed to it; that in reality these arose spontaneously in the mind of Eve, which proceeding from the operations of the subordinate appetites and passions, aided by an erring and licentious imagination, was the foe by which they had been deceived and injured, and against which it would therefore be their wisdom in future to use the most vigorous exertions of their best powers and affections, and to endeavour to crush every latent propensity to wickedness, in its birth (Gen. iii. 14, 15.) The whole of this sentence taken literally but describes the form and condition of the serpent; and its design in this view seems intended to mark the hue, nature, and vast inferiority of this reptile to the human species, as contrasted with those extravagant notions concerning its superior sense and subtilty, which had contributed to their seduction. A contrast seems represented between men and reptiles, to warn the former from being again misled and seduced from their duty by the supposed suggestions of inferior animals; especially by those, which, in reality, rank among the very lowest in the scale of creation. But under the literal sense, there seems to be couched an allusion to the real cause of their error and transgression. The moral world, as then centred in the minds of our first parents, seems represented under two great divisions, that which, like man in the visible creation, constitutes the glory and dignity of this invisible system, and destined to obtain an ascendancy over all which are by nature its inferiors; and that which, like the reptile in the animal world, holds the very lowest rank in the moral frame. In the present instance, this last had usurped a most unreasonable ascendant, having so darkened and perverted the intellectual faculties and the moral powers, that they had been betrayed into an act directly opposed to the plainest suggestions of reason, under the immediate guidance of a divine prohibition. It is however predicted that reason and religion would, upon the whole, maintain its just ascendant in the moral scale, as man actually does in the natural creation; and that though these nobler powers which may be identified with man himself, as being essential to his true place in creation, will be liable to be injured and impaired by the venom infused from the sordid propensities of this present condition, yet that these last are to be viewed as in a manner foreign from and at



variance with the true constitution and tendencies of his being; and that the powers of reason and religion, truth and virtue, will assert and maintain their true ascendancy, crushing every low and vile and impious propensity, with the stroke of destruction.

*The seed of the serpent*, viewed in this allegorical sense, must import generally those low propensities in mankind, by which they are seduced into error and sin; and in like manner, *the seed of the woman* must indicate generally the higher principles and affections of our nature. Though, therefore, in this instance, the struggle between the contending principles is portrayed only in a particular procedure on the part of Eve, yet it is to be regarded as a general representation of the workings of the human mind, under similar circumstances. In her case, the feebleness and imperfection of the latter had been manifested; but it is here predicted that acquiring strength and vigour in the course of its subsequent contests with its opposite, it would obtain its just superiority, and in the end effectually vanquish and destroy the adversary. And since a signal instance of this was exhibited in our Saviour, and the dignified struggle in which he was engaged with the seed of the serpent, in the plenitude of his power, is, in like manner, portrayed in similar allegorical terms, and this triumph was followed by his Gospel of deliverance from sin unto holiness, from death unto life and immortality, it is probable that here is a particular allusion to these glorious events. In this view, I apprehend that neither of these persons is to be regarded merely as an individual, but they are to be considered as representatives of their species; the trial and failure of Eve and her consort, exhibiting a too faithful specimen of our common frailty in the first stages of our moral being; while the triumphs of Jesus, in a much more arduous contest with the same adversary, afford a most noble exhibition of that superiority of which the principles of reason, religion, and virtue are capable, and of which many similar instances, though inferior in degree, were afterwards manifested in the lives of his primitive disciples. Both therefore were followed by general results; the sentences which were passed upon the primitive pair, are in fact but descriptive of our general state and condition as mortals; and we may learn from hence, that the evils of mortality are the appointed attendants of our moral imperfections and errors; and, in like

manner, "the deliverance of life," which our Saviour experienced when he was raised from the grave, is proclaimed to the whole human race, to be conferred upon them in all its glory and blessedness, whenever they shall have attained to an elevation and purity of character, which is suited to so glorious a transformation of their physical nature.

Verse 16. This verse is no other than a prediction of the peculiar circumstances of trial and subordination, to which the female sex, in general, have been subjected. The conduct of Eve on this occasion, appears to have been viewed by God, as an indication of the general frailty of her sex; and, if it be admitted, that her failure was a result of the natural operations of her mind, unperverted by the potent subtilty and guile of an apostate archangel (a mere gratis hypothesis), and that her moral nature continued the same; though susceptible of great improvement, there is reason to conclude, that the inference was founded in reality; that, in a general view, our primitive mother was a just representative of her female descendants, under those circumstances of imperfection in which they all necessarily commence their moral career; and, consequently, that the similar trials to which they are subjected, furnishes a discipline which is suited to their common frailty.

Verses 17-19. We have here a prediction of what has since been the actual state of the soil and its produce, till it is cleared and cultivated by the care and labour of man; of the toil to which he is thus necessitated; and of that natural decay, terminating in dissolution, which is consequent to the frailty of his present animal structure. Here appears no indication of any change, either physical or moral, in the frame and nature of Adam; but on the contrary, it is merely a description of his *actual* imperfections and frailty, in consequence of which he was betrayed into a flagrant breach of duty. It refers to the fact of his humble origin and condition, and from this draws the consequence, that, being composed of such frail, perishing materials, he would, under the life of toil to which he was subjected, gradually decline and at length be resolved back into those inanimate materials of which he was composed. Nor does the sentence refer to his corporeal frame alone; it views him as a whole, and has a special reference to those moral imperfections which had been manifested by his disobedience. The last clause,—“Out of it wast thou

taken," &c. may, I conceive, be thus interpreted:—"The frail structure and humble materials of your frame is the index and accompaniment of a corresponding imperfection and frailty in your moral condition; you have made few attainments above your animal origin, and the low propensities appertaining to it, obtain so powerful an influence over the higher principles of your nature, that it is not possible, in the present sphere of your existence, for you to become morally fitted to be transformed to that state of immortality which might indeed have been the reward of your persevering obedience to my commands. Your person, instead of undergoing a translation to a state in which it will no more be liable to suffer dissolution, must be resolved into its primitive elements, and drop back into that state of inanimation from whence it was produced."

The sentence passed upon Adam, amounts then, I conceive, to this:—that he was a mortal, because he was a morally imperfect and offending creature; a representation which implies, that had his moral state been more advanced, or had he persevered in maintaining an obedience to the divine commands, he might have attained to an exemption from what was now his appointed doom—an exemption which was realised in the case of his descendant, Enoch. This total escape from death, however, was peculiar to that patriarch, and to one or two more of the most eminently pious of our race. Upon all mankind, with these two or three exceptions, nature has been suffered to take its course. But, from these exceptions, and the intimation given by the occasion and terms of this "condemnation," we may derive the lesson, that every step in the course of righteousness, is an advance in that moral preparation which tends to obtain our deliverance from the evils of mortality. The present condition of our being is indeed humiliating; inheriting the nature of our primitive ancestor, we are all mortal, and all morally imperfect, and occasionally offending creatures; but the path of obedience is open to us; our moral powers grow in vigour and expansion by experience and exertion, and the course we are called to pursue, like the light of day advancing toward its meridian, presents to us, with increasing lustre, the light of immortality, as the ultimate blessing to be conferred upon our virtues. It is in vain, however, to expect that the soul of man can escape the fate

which is here predicted with respect to the whole person; it was plainly *its* imperfections which gave occasion to the sentence, and upon which the sentence is denounced. The body is but the mere instrument or piece of mechanism by which it is supported, and, independently of it, is of no more value than any other mass of inanimate matter. It was the soul which sinned through the instrumentality of the body, and which, through the same instrumentality, is here sentenced to die. To suppose that the soul is unaffected by the stroke of death, is to suppose that the sentence was in fact not executed. Adam is clearly given to understand, that he shall return to the same inanimate state from whence he was created. Prior to that event, he had no existence; his life, his sense, and every perceptive power, commenced with his formation; the air, "the breath of God," acted upon his respiratory organs, and he became a living soul. These and all the other functions of the animal frame ceasing to act, the vital spark is extinguished, and *he* returns to the same state as before; that is, to a state in which he is as totally inanimate as the dust out of which he was created. If this be not regarded as the nature and extent of this sentence, a sentence which could have conveyed no other idea to Adam himself, who well knew that he had literally no existence prior to his creation; nothing of that pleasing, conscious being, in which he had since been accustomed to rejoice, and which he must now have clearly learned that he was destined to lose; we are put upon a thousand surmises concerning the real purport of that which is in truth expressed with a simplicity and emphasis, admirably adapted to the apprehension of man in his primeval simplicity. And it has accordingly been the business of casuists in divinity, to devise a "living" and even immortal "death;" in other words, to fabricate a monstrous contradiction, as the consequence of Adam's sin, and to make it the occasion of consigning the immense myriads of his then unborn posterity, to a state of ceaseless and interminable torments!

HOMO.

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*On Professor Stuart's Letters to Rev. Dr. Channing.*

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR,—Some time ago I observed you took notice of the re-publication of a pamphlet at Dundee (by a Mr. Adam), written by Professor Stuart,

in reply to Dr. Channing. From Mr. Adam's account of the pamphlet, it appears that the Trinitarians in his neighbourhood considered Mr. Stuart's argument as unanswered and unanswerable.

I have since met with it, and understand it is handed about and puffed in the same manner in other places. I believe it has been answered in America; but the following remarks, which I wrote out for the use of an inquirer who did not wish to be perplexed with Greek criticisms, may, perhaps, be of use to others of like disposition; and if you think they may be useful for that reason to any of your readers, you are welcome to them. The remarks are, from their design, a little desultory, but they bear upon the strong points of Mr. Stuart's argument, and any person who is satisfied with them so far, will be at no loss to dispose of his minor points. W. B.

Mr. Stuart is an able writer, and makes the most of his cause. He has also a great appearance of candour, which is captivating. But he is not consistent in his candour. He is like a wary general, who, seeing some points of his position untenable, falls back frankly and at once; but only to concentrate his forces upon some other point, that he may dispute the field more obstinately. One manifest proof of this is, the manner in which he insists upon the stale assertion, "that if we abandon the doctrine of the Trinity, we must at last land in Deism." This is contradicted by experience. Many most exemplary Christians have rejected the doctrine of the Trinity in their youth or middle age, and continued steadfast Christians to their death. Priestley founded the Unitarian Societies in England fifty years ago, and instead of going farther, there is a sensible falling back in the present day among the Unitarians, from some of his *extreme* views.

Dr. Cook the historian, a clergyman of the Church of Scotland, and of unquestioned orthodoxy respecting the substantial views of the evangelical party; but agreeing with Stuart, that they have pushed their doctrines too far—Dr. Cook (I say), with more consistent candour and truth, foretells, "that the progress of feeling among Unitarians, will naturally fall back towards the orthodox doctrines." The reason he assigns is, "that one extreme generally begets another." It is, besides, peculiarly unfair in Mr. Stuart, who has himself distinctly receded from the *extreme* views of the Arianism and other olden Creeds, in consequence of the progress of truth, to doubt, and not only to doubt, but to affirm that the same thing will not take place with those who have been carried to what he considers an *opposite extreme*.

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With regard to the doctrine which he teaches, and to

which it appears (if we may take Mr. Adam for a sample) the Evangelical party, as they call themselves, are willing to adhere; it amounts to this—"that while he will not justify the use of such terms as three persons in the God-head; yet that something like it is taught in the Scriptures, seeing that they affirm a positive and real distinction of three somethings in the Divine Being." Now without saying anything about whether this is consistent with the Divine Unity, which is also admitted to be a Scriptural doctrine, let us inquire into the evidence of his assertion, simply as a matter of Scriptural testimony. He undertakes this proof, by showing from different classes of texts, 1. That Christ is called God. 2. That he is said to be equal with God. 3. That Divine Attributes are ascribed to him, such as Omniscience, Omnipotence, Eternity, Worship. And he supports his views of those texts by a profusion of Greek criticisms, of which a common reader cannot of course be judge. Now we shall cut the matter short, by admitting that many of the texts he has quoted, are favourable to, or seem to establish the propositions above mentioned; but when that is done, I insist that the texts in question, relate only to the character and offices of Christ; and it is only by a far-fetched *inference* that the doctrine of the Trinity can be drawn from them. Granting that Divine titles and powers are ascribed to Christ, it does not follow, that there is a threefold, or a twofold, or any particular distinction in the nature of the Deity.

To see the force and importance of this remark, I would remind you, that the terms "Christ," or even "the Son," are not the proper names of that Divine influence or nature (whatever it be), which dwelt in or was united to the man Jesus. Stuart himself and many other modern divines of the Evangelical school, admit the truth of this observation. Thus (page 122, 123), he says, "the term Son of God does not appropriately designate Christ as *Divine*, but as the *Incarnate Mediator*; as him whom the Father had *sanctified* and *sent* into the world (John x. 25, 36). He was not *sent* and *sanctified* as God, because in that respect he was perfect and immutable. It was as *Mediator*, as *Messiah*, as *Christ*, that he was sent into the world; and as *Son*, he filled and acted in a *sub-ordinate* capacity." Jesus having possession of these titles (and consequently the powers and privileges annexed to the offices), does not of itself prove the Son to be Supreme

God. By usage, indeed, these titles, and particularly Son, have become a kind of proper name in theology, to designate the second person of the Trinity. But this is not Scripture language. "Would" (he adds, after making remarks to this effect,) "theologians keep these ideas in view, I cannot help thinking, that they might be able to understand each other much better, and to reason more conclusively." Now here he was in the right track, and if he had kept in it and been consistent, he would have come to this conclusion—that it did not signify what divine honours and powers were ascribed to *Christ*, to the *Mediator*; because they were all *official*, not *intrinsic*; they were *partial*, not *absolute*; they were *subordinate*, not *supreme*.

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Upon one occasion, Mr. Stuart expresses himself thus (page 44): "But may not God have been, in a manner altogether peculiar and mysterious, united to Jesus, without at once displaying his whole power in him, or necessarily rendering him supremely perfect? In the act of creation, God does not put out *all* his power, neither in preservation nor in sanctification; nor does he bring *all* his knowledge into action, when he inspires prophets and apostles. Was it necessary that he should exert it *all*, when in conjunction with the human nature of Christ? In governing the world from day to day, God does not surely exhaust his omnipotence or his wisdom. He employs only so much as is necessary to accomplish the design which he has in view. In his union with the man Jesus, the divine *Logos* [*i. e.* the *Word* spoken of by John], he could not, of course, be necessitated to put forth all his energy, or to exhibit all his knowledge and wisdom. Just so much of it, and no more, was *manifested*, as was requisite to constitute the character of an all-sufficient, incarnate Mediator and Redeemer."

Now keeping this in view, it is clear, that whatever divine titles and attributes are ascribed in the Scriptures to Christ, it is not in the *supreme degree* that they are so, but only *so far* as was necessary for his performance of the office of Mediator and Judge of the world, &c. And this disposes *at once* with the great mass of the texts which he and others bring forward to prove what is called the *Supreme Deity* of Christ. They prove no such thing; they merely prove that the man Jesus had such an inti-

mate and sufficient connexion with the Deity, as qualified him for all which he had to do, to suffer, or to teach as the Christ—the appointed Mediator between God and men, and the Judge of the world. But with regard to the Divine influence thus operating by and through him, the nature of it abstractly, and whether it belonged to a first, second, or third person in the Trinity, is a totally different question. Only let us keep this in mind, and it will save us a world of difficulty and confusion.

(To be continued in our next.)

## REVIEW.

*On the Formation of the Christian Character. By Henry Ware.*

MOST cordially do we recommend this little work to all who feel the need of assistance in the arduous task of forming the Christian character. It will be found to be not only excellent in theory, but so thoroughly practical, that no one who reads it with a sincere desire to profit by its contents, will rise from its perusal, without a deeper consciousness of his deficiencies, and a more earnest desire to correct those faults, which he has seen reflected in the faithful mirror presented to his mental vision. And when bitter disappointments or worldly cares agitate and harass the mind, recourse to its valuable pages will compose the troubled spirit, and diffuse a holy calm over the frame.

Till the contents of this useful book are practically impressed on the mind, it may with advantage form a part of the Christian's daily devotional exercises: many may be led by it to regard religion, not as an outward garb, which may be put off and on at pleasure, but as an inward, ever-actuating principle, which is to pervade the mind, from the first dawn of the infant faculties, to survive the stroke by which death divides the silver cord, and for ever to abide with the immortal soul in the mansions of eternal blessedness. How true it is, that "men need to be made sensible that religion is a personal thing, a matter of personal application and experience!" How many pass from the cradle to the grave without any clearer idea of the requirements of religion, than a vague notion of the propriety of attending public worship, and of repeating a form of prayer at stated intervals. How astonished would many be, who consider themselves Christians, to be told, that "their religion must never be separated from their life, their life from their religion," but that "God is to be served by the entire life, by its actions, as well as by its thoughts, its duties as well as its desires, its deeds as well as its feelings."

Our Author's definition of religion is forcible, and its requirements are powerfully stated in the following passage: "To attain and perfect this character, is to be the object of your desire, and the business of your life. You must never lose sight of it. In all that you learn, think, feel, and do, you are to have reference to



this end. Whatever tends to promote this, you are to cherish and favour; whatever hinders this, or in any degree operates injuriously upon it, you are to discountenance and shun. All that gives bias to your passions and appetites, to your inclinations and thoughts, to your opinion of yourself, to your conduct toward others, your private or public employment of your time, your business and gains, your recreation and pleasures, is to be judged of by a reference to this standard, and condemned or approved accordingly. You are to feel that nothing is of such consequence to you as the Christian character, that to form this is the very work for which you were sent into the world; and if this be not done, you do nothing, you had better never have been born, for your life is wasted without accomplishing its object, and your soul enters on eternity without having secured its salvation. The provisions of God's mercy are slighted, and for you the Saviour has lived and died in vain."

The formation of the Christian character, though an arduous work, is shown to be in the power of all to accomplish; and the distinction is well defined, between "the necessity of every one's own labours being exerted to secure his salvation, yet the inadequacy of the utmost virtue to purchase or merit it." The observations on the proper state of mind to be cultivated on commencing this important business, are admirable. The directions for reading, meditation, and prayer, cannot be perused without advantage, and the caution against expecting the durability of those glowing feelings of excitement which the devout Christian occasionally enjoys, may be useful to those, who, from inexperience, are apt to be discouraged at the transitory nature of that glow of holy rapture which at times they experience. They will learn from our author, that those seasons when the enraptured mind, soaring on the wings of contemplation, till it can almost gaze through golden vistas into heaven, "are few as angels' visits, and that their real worth is to be ascertained by the religious power gained from them, towards meeting the duties and sufferings, the joys and sorrows, the temptations, trials, and conflicts of actual life."

The remorse excited in the mind when first awakened to a sense of its past transgressions, is feelingly portrayed; and the exaggerated light, in which the individual under these circumstances views his own character, is well explained. "He sees at one view all his past sins, open and secret, and sets them by the side, not of the hidden and private life of others, but by their decent public demeanour." These feelings of penitence, however, if not carried to excess, are highly beneficial, as they will lead to true humility and sincere reformation; but, at such times, the mind requires rather to be soothed into a state of calm, than roused to greater excitement; there is no reason, because conscience is awakened to a sense of sin, that despair should be excited of the mercy of God, for now the mind is best prepared to receive and to value the precious legacy of peace bequeathed by the Saviour to his true disciples.

The following passage may enable all to ascertain for themselves, whether they have or have not acquired the true spirit of

personal religion. "All men know 'that if the salvation reigned within,' it would regulate the movements of the life, as surely as the internal motions of the watch are indicated on its face; if the hands point wrong, they know, without looking further, that there is disorder within." In the same manner, the outward deportment proves the inward state of heart and mind.

Scarcely any thing can be imagined more forcible, more awakening, more calculated to assist the devout, to arouse the indifferent, to lead to increased watchfulness, and to more rigid self-examination, than the chapter "on the religious discipline of life." Well would it be, if such reflections were generally reduced into practice, for assuredly to him who succeeded in the attempt, "heaven would be already begun; and when welcomed to the joy of his Lord, it would be to a joy which his regulated spirit had already tasted in the labours and pleasures of obedience below."

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*An Illustration of the Epistles of St. Paul, including an entirely new Translation. By Charles Eyre, Clk. Trinity College, Cambridge, A. B. 1807. Two vols. London; Longman & Co. 1832.*

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OF all the writings in the world, those of St. Paul have been most unfairly treated. Tortured sometimes in the crucible of theological alchemy, they have been attempted to be changed from the natural substances of which they are composed, to the desired metal which the dreaming philosophers sought. Sometimes dragged mercilessly into the inquisition of school divinity, they have been placed under the savage discipline of the rack and the screw, till confessions have been extorted from them, of things with which they were totally unacquainted; and evidence has been wrung from them, in support of allegations, which, when left to speak freely, they positively deny. And as this forced testimony has always been just what the torturers determined beforehand that it should be; the testimony, has, of course, varied according to the temper and object of these inquisitors. If these ill-used, persecuted, and constantly tormented Epistles were in the hands of the Roman inquisitors, then there was no rest nor escape for them, till they had testified that the Pope was the successor of Peter, that the Church was infallible, that a priest could convert bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, that the Church may grant indulgences, that the intercession of angels and saints should be sought, and that Christ instituted the seven sacraments of baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, holy orders, and matrimony. And then, when any one called in question the conclusiveness of this extorted evidence, the ready reply was unfailingly at hand, that seventeen infallible Councils, beginning with that of Nice in 325, and ending with that of Trent in 1541 to 1549, had determined, beyond all controversy, that the writings of St. Paul had, of their own accord, in the most unequivocal language, declared these doctrines to be true.

If these same unfortunate Epistles were in the hands of the Calvinistic inquisitors, then they were compelled to give evidence against the Church of Rome, and in favour of election and reprobation, particular redemption, irresistible grace, effectual calling, and final perseverance. And when it was objected, that at least some of these doctrines could not be true, because God must be impartial, and man free; it was replied, that Paul has plainly taught God's sovereignty and man's inability, the inflexibility of the Divine decrees, and the necessity under which God is laid to glorify himself in the endless groans and miseries of the vessels of wrath, who were created for the regions of woe as expressly as the elect were formed for heaven.

If St. Paul's Epistles were in the power of the Church of England inquisitors, then they were forced to affirm, that the Church of Rome was Antichrist, and the Pope "the man of sin;" and that the Church of Christ should be established by law, and be girt about by Thirty-nine Articles and three Creeds, and be adorned with Pluralists, and Bishops, and Archbishops, with princely incomes, and have the King for its head. And if it be asked, how Paul could teach the necessity of any church establishment whatever, while he himself was a zealous and fearless and conscientious dissenter from the Jewish establishment; or how he could sanction enormous salaries to be received by the ministers of that religion which he preached for no salary; it is replied, Oh, but Paul in his Epistles argues that the dignity of the Christian ministry is to be properly sustained, and as the state of society alters, the Apostle must have intended that the condition of the clergy should correspond with such alterations.

Oh yes, it is, alas! too true, that unfeeling torturers of the Epistles in past ages, made Paul say whatever suited their purpose, and sanction any doctrine which their fancies had devised. And the rack-and-screw theologians of modern times, treat the Epistles with at least an equal degree of injustice and cruelty. They will not permit them to speak for themselves. They will not take the evidence of any one Epistle, as one whole thing. That evidence is broken up into shreds. Words are taken out of their connection, and severed from their relation to other words. The sound, rather than the sense, is made the standard of interpretation. And to complete the series of the inconsistencies, so much to be lamented in the conduct of Paul's tormentors, they *now* set him in opposition to Jesus Christ, and *now* place him upon an equality with his Lord and Master, and *then* elevate him above the Son of God.

Offended, and justly so, at seeing Paul thus preferred to Jesus, the mighty-minded Bentham was driven to exclaim, "Not Paul, but Jesus," and to write a volume in justification of the propriety and even necessity of his exclamation.

And which is most likely to be nearest the truth, and to be honouring the Saviour; the man who says, "not Paul, but Jesus?" or he who says, "not Jesus, but Paul"? But the latter is in fact what a man does say, whenever he endeavours to extract from the Epistles, doctrines which are directly at variance with the

plain language and positive commands of Jesus Christ. And yet this is done daily and hourly by those who arrogate to themselves the terms orthodox and evangelical. Ask them for proof of their doctrines, and straight they give you a text from Paul, tortured into a seeming compliance with their views. But let a whole Epistle be read through at one time, as every letter should be—and each Epistle is a letter—and the drift and design of the whole all along kept in sight, and the quoted text, the scrap torn away, assumes a totally different and not unfrequently an entirely opposite meaning.

The writer of these remarks well remembers his astonishment at the utterly different aspect which the Epistle to the Romans assumed, when he, for the first time, carefully read it through at a sitting, discarding as much as possible all preconceived opinions and early associations with particular expressions, from what that same Epistle had presented to his mental eye, accustomed as that eye had previously been to look on it only in detached parts, and to consider those parts as so many independent propositions, instead of being, as they really are, portions of a continuous argument.

It is to a certain degree the same with each Epistle, and therefore it is of the first importance that every one desirous of treating Paul fairly, and of understanding what he is teaching, should read an Epistle as much as possible, with the circumstances of both the writer and the addressed before the mind's eye. And to enable readers of Paul to recal and employ these circumstances, has been the object of Locke, and Lardner, and Priestley, and Belsham, and a host of other eminent and pious Christians, who desired that Paul should be understood—were anxious that his writings should no longer be made the instruments of error, controversy, and polemical rancour; and who were equally anxious that Christians should be no more disposed to act upon the sentiment, “not Jesus, but Paul,” than they should upon the sentiment, “not Paul but Jesus;” both, when rationally interpreted, bearing harmonious testimony to the same great and essential truths.

Towards the same laudable object, the labours of Mr. Eyre are also directed. His illustrations are worthy the perusal of every Scriptural inquirer. May the day be near, when there shall be an agreement of opinion on the Epistles, a unity of spirit in obeying Christ, and a oneness of mind and heart in the love and worship of God, the Father of all.

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*The Wanderings of Christendom from Gospel Truth, and the Prospects of its return to primitive Evangelism. A Discourse, preached in Young-Street Chapel, Edinburgh; by B. T. Stannus. Bell & Bradfute, Edinburgh; R. Hunter, and C. Fox, London.*

YEs, indeed! Christendom has for ages, in obstinate waywardness, pursued the devious paths of metaphysics, and gloom, and sadness, which lead the unhappy wanderer therein, directly away from Gospel truth and

evangelical love. Oh, it is a melancholy picture, although bright are its colours, and tasteful are its pencillings, which Mr. Stannus has given in the Sermon before us, of the wanderings of Christendom into the labyrinths of Plato—into the “Groves of Academus”—into the wilds of Homoi-ousians, and Homo-ousians—and into the trackless desert of mystery. Pity it is, ten thousand pities, that this picture must be confessed to be so scrupulously true to the original. But so, alas! it is; and we are compelled to own with a sigh, while we gaze upon it,—this is really a faithful representation of the infatuated wanderings of Christendom.

But to prevent despondency, to minister hope, to cheer the drooping spirit, to change sighing into rejoicing, Mr. S. kindly places another picture before us, in which Christendom is seen returning to her “*first love*,” primitive evangelism. Hail! lovely sight. There is the “star of evangelical truth,” lighting Christendom on her return;—there are the streams of living waters, and the bread of life, to invigorate her on her journey;—and there is enlightened, and invigorated Christendom, in the act of hastening away from the strange land of creeds, confessions, and politico-religious establishments, into which she has been taking a long and dark journey, back to the home of her Father. And this picture must, if there be truth in the Bible, be as faithful a representation of what Christendom will do, as the other is of what she has done.

Most true it is, as Mr. Stannus observes, that “Christians are rapidly returning to their first love.” Welcome all; and let them all return. And to the benevolent wish with which Mr. Stannus closes this beautiful discourse—“And may all our righteous endeavours to bring our fellow-men to their ‘*first love*,’ be crowned with success,” we respond a most hearty Amen.

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## THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, APRIL 1, 1833.

In our number for February, we noticed the Sunday evening Lectures, then in course of delivery, at the Unitarian Chapel, Paisley. The Lectures were continued to the first Sunday in March, the concluding one, on the harmony of the Attributes of God, being preached by Mr. W. McKean, a native of Paisley, but now resident in this City. The observations with which he closed the services, are so excellent that we gladly insert them in our pages:—

“In concluding these evening Lectures, I rejoice to congratulate you, my brethren, on the fulfilment of the Saviour’s words, “Blessed are ye when men revile you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.” You have experienced this in the Christian sympathy of those who have spoken in your behalf, in the cheerful manner in which the defence of the Gospel has been carried on, in the success which has attended the war with its enemies, and in the general hope that the thrusts which have been made at the cruel theology of Scotland’s confession, have neither been aimless nor unsuccessful.

“Had the abettors of mysterious Christianity been aware of the result, they probably would have spared their heartless attacks on a few humble Christians, who quietly and unobtrusively worship God in the simplicity which is in Christ. But you needed something to awaken you; for although it is well that you have shaken off the errors of the popular superstition, you owed to your brethren, to unbind their heavy burdens, and invite them to participate in the glorious liberty of the sons of God. But it is so generally. The enemies of the worship of the Father, have been the primary instruments of its extension; and but for them, the truth might have remained concealed under the rubbish which priests have

heaped upon it, and your own minds been still enveloped in the gloom of the dark ages. The attempt which was made to crush you in the quietness of your lives, and recluseness of your worship, has brought you more into public notice; and awakened in some minds, a desire to know something of a sect which is every where spoken against. This is all that is necessary to commence and insure your progress, if experience be any test; for no controversy has ever existed on this subject, which has not ended in the promotion of your cause.

"Regarding the part I have been honoured to bear in it, I rejoice to have been associated with some who have long borne testimony to the universal paternity of God, and with others who are but arming for the combat. Let such as are interested know, that arms which can be wielded with effect, by youthful aspirants and soldiers of yesterday, are terrible in the hands of veterans; and that creeds which are falling, by the decomposition of their own unnatural combinations, must have their ruin accelerated, when brought within the range of reason and revelation, if pointed by experienced engineers. I plead for myself and coadjutors, your forbearance with what weakness we may have manifested, but claim your approbation as a right, to the willingness of our minds, and purity of our intentions. It would be the source of unfeigned pleasure to me, to return to my native town, to regularly record the goodness of the Father, and assert his unrivalled right to the homage of the whole creation; but the provision of life seems to be prepared at present where I reside. Still I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and my ardent desire for the emancipation of my townsmen from the bondage of prejudice, and to witness a more extended spirit of benevolence diffusing itself through the community. Do I blame them for want of liberality in general? quite the reverse. The numbers who have attended to hear the vindication of injured Christianity, would condemn me if I did. But it is in the power of a few bigots, through the medium of the press, to libel a whole community, which their own disgusting principles has partially disorganized, by sickening of public ordinances, or driving to the cheerless waste of infidelity.

"To you all, my townsmen, who have given us such patient and attentive hearing, I return thanks most cordially for myself, and in the name of my fellow-labourers. You, who have no opportunity of attending our stated worship, have had an unfavourable sample of Unitarian preaching; and may probably carry away the same erroneous impression I long bore on my own mind—that Unitarians are a disputatious class, who live, and move, and have their being in the atmosphere of controversy. Believe me, nothing is more untrue. Our religion is peace—peace to them that are far off, and to them that are nigh. But attacked, and vilified, and misrepresented as we are, we are kept in the same continual warfare as were our Lord and his Apostles. Christendom, with all its divisions, has one point at which it is united, that is, against us: so that from the thunder of Rome, down to the anathema of the Tabernacle, we are never out of fire and smoke. Thus the world sees not Unitarianism. For thus she is always before the world among the waves of controversy, struggling for life, with Popes, Prelates, Presbyters, and Laymen, endeavouring to keep her down. He who would behold her in her glory, must look at her in the temple of nature, lighted up with the splendour of heaven's revelations, robed in the simplicity of truth, the meretricious ornaments of false religion under her feet; from her altar rising the sweet incense of adoration of the Father, and from her countenance beaming emanations of good will to man.

"When we shall be left at leisure to preach the Gospel without reference to its corruptions, then shall we be able to set it out in its own attractive loveliness; and the human mind not bewildered as in the days that are gone, by mysterious contradictions, and improbable transac-

tions, shall have delight in its doctrines and comfort in its hopes. So far from an unnatural warfare being carried on between reason and revelation, the same harmony will be felt, as I have shown to exist among all the attributes of God. For, as in nature, every creature is formed for its element, fitted for its purposes, and compensated for its wants; so the mind is suited to the information heaven in its goodness has vouchsafed; and not a solitary instance of inappropriateness exists among the works of God. That the mind in its natural exercise, refuses the perversions of the Gospel, is true; but that it naturally refuses any thing whatever which has the marks of truth, is false; and this is the trick of the Churchman, who would degrade his species into a community of worshippers of—they know not what.

“It may undeceive some of you probably, to be informed, that there is very little controversy in our preaching in general; excepting always such evening Lectures as those just finished, which are set apart expressly for the purpose of vindicating our cause, which necessarily involves it. For the greater part, we are occupied with the unfailing doctrines of God’s love, which nature exhibits and revelation illustrates; on the duties we owe to him as our Father, and to one another as brethren; on the simple yet sublimely inspired teachings of the man of sorrows, whether extracting lessons from the fall of a sparrow or a flower of the field; or expatiating on the hopes, prospects, and destinies of the world. These, and such as these, supply an exhaustless store of comfort and instruction, which the dissection and exposure of the impostures of Priests can never produce. In contemplation on such subjects, we are training in this state, for a better and a nobler. They prove a hiding-place during the tempests of life, cool the sunshine of prosperity, dispel the gloom of adversity, create a serenity of soul in every vicissitude, and cheer and lighten the path which leads to glory, honour, and immortality. Compared with this, you must be aware, that disputing points of doctrine which we know to be useless as well as false, must be a heartless task. Yet we will not shrink from it when duty ordains or humanity calls, because we believe that the greatest blessing we can bestow, is the deliverance of the captive mind from the debasement of modern divinity, and its establishment in the simplicity which is in Christ. It is to bring from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

“I beg leave to add, and beseech you to bear testimony to it, wherever you go, that we desire to cherish the most unbounded good-will to all men. We give the right hand of fellowship to every one that bears the image of his Maker, of every creed, colour, and country, because we believe that God is no respecter of persons. But with sin, and folly, and corruption—whether in creeds or conduct—whether in ourselves or others—we are at open war. We expect you will keep this distinction in view, so that there be no breach of brotherhood. Let kindness write her law on every heart; and although differences continue, let every one walk worthy of his vocation, in lowliness and meekness, forbearing one another in love.”

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## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

OUR friends in various parts of England, are respectfully informed, that their communications for this Magazine, if sent to the care of MR. HUNTER, ST. PAUL’S CHURCH YARD, LONDON, *previously to the last day of every Month*, will reach the Editor in a few days afterwards.

## CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

No. 81.

MAY, 1833.

Vol. VII.

*The Evidences of Christianity. By William Ellery Channing, D. D.*

(Continued from page 266.)

I HAVE now stated some of the great facts relating to the origin of Christianity, of which we have clear and full proof. We know when and where this religion sprung up. We know its author, and the men whom he employed as the first propagators of his doctrine. We know the great features of the religion as it was originally taught; and still more, we have the writings of its first teachers, by which its precise character is placed beyond doubt. I now proceed to lay before you some of the arguments in support of Christianity, which are involved in, or are founded on these facts.

I believe Christianity to be true, or to have come from God, because it seems to me impossible to trace it to any other origin. It must have a cause, and no other adequate cause can be assigned. The incongruity between this religion, and all the circumstances amidst which it grew up, is so remarkable, that we are compelled to look beyond and above this world for its explanation. When I go back to the origin of Christianity, and place myself in the age and country of its birth, I can find nothing in the opinions of men, or in the state of society, which can account for its beginning or diffusion. There was no power on earth to create or uphold such a system. There was nothing congenial with it in Judaism, in heathenism, or in the state of society among the most cultivated communities. If you study the religions, governments, and philosophical systems of that age, you will discover in them, not even a leaning towards Christianity. It sprung up in opposition to all, making no compromise with human prejudice or passion; and it sprung up, not only superior to all, but possessing at its very beginning a perfection, which has been the admiration of ages, and which instead of being dimmed by time, has come forth more brightly in proportion to the progress of the human mind.

I know indeed that at the origin of our religion, the old heathen worship had fallen into disrepute among the en-



lightened classes throughout the Roman empire, and was gradually losing its hold on the populace. Accordingly, some have pretended that Christianity grew from the ruins of the ancient faith. But this is not true; for the decline of the heathen systems was the product of causes singularly adverse to the origination of such a system as Christianity. One cause was, the monstrous depravity of the age, which led multitudes to an utter scorn of religion in all its forms and restraints, and which prepared others to exchange their old worship for still grosser and more licentious superstitions, particularly for the magical arts of Egypt. Surely this corruption of manners, this wide-wasting moral pestilence will not be considered by any as a germ of the Christian religion. Another principal agent in loosening the foundations of the old systems, was philosophy, a noble effort indeed of the human intellect, but one which did nothing to prepare the way for Christianity. The most popular systems of philosophy at the birth of Christianity, were the Sceptical and the Epicurean; the former of which turned religion into a jest, denied the possibility of arriving at truth, and cast the mind on an ocean of doubt in regard to every subject of inquiry; whilst the latter placed happiness in ease, inculcated a calm indifference both as to this world and the next, and would have set down the Christian doctrine of self-sacrifice, of suffering for truth and duty, as absolute insanity. Now I ask in what single point do these systems touch Christianity, or what impulse could they have given to its invention? There was, indeed, another philosophical sect of a nobler character, I mean the Stoical. This maintained that virtue was the supreme good, and it certainly nurtured some firm and lofty spirits amidst the despotism which then ground all classes to the dust. But the self-reliance, sternness, apathy, and pride of the Stoic, his defiance and scorn of mankind, his want of sympathy with human suffering; and his extravagant exaggerations of his own virtue, placed this sect in singular opposition to Christianity; so that our religion might as soon have sprung from Scepticism and Epicureanism, as from Stoicism. There was another system, if it be worthy of the name, which prevailed in Asia, and was not unknown to the Jews, often called the Oriental philosophy. But this, though certainly an improvement on the common heathenism, was visionary and mystical, and placed happiness in

an intuitive or immediate perception of God, which was to be gained by contemplation and extasies, by emaciation of the body and desertion of the world. I need not tell you how infinitely removed was the practical benevolent spirit of Christianity from this spurious sanctity and profitless enthusiasm. I repeat it, then, that the various causes which were silently operating against the established heathen systems in the time of Christ, had no tendency to suggest and spread such a religion as he brought, but were as truly hostile to it as the worst forms of heathenism.

We cannot find, then, the origin of Christianity in the heathen world. Shall we look for it in the Jewish? This topic is too familiar to need much exposition. You know the character, feelings, expectations, of the descendants of Abraham at the appearing of Jesus; and you need not be told that a system more opposed to the Jewish mind than that which he taught, cannot be imagined. There was nothing friendly to it in the soil or climate of Judea. As easily might the luxuriant trees of our forests spring from the sands of an Arabian desert. There was never, perhaps, a national character so deeply stamped as the Jewish. Ages after ages of unparalleled suffering, have done little to wear away its indelible features. In the time of Jesus, the whole influence of education and religion, was employed to fix it in every member of the state. In the bosom of this community, and among its humblest classes, sprung up Christianity—a religion as unfettered by Jewish prejudices, as untainted by the earthly narrow views of the age, as if it had come from another world. Judaism was all around it, but did not mar it by one trace, or sully its brightness by a single breath. Can we find, then, the cause of Christianity in the Jewish any more than in the heathen world?

Christianity, I maintain, was not the growth of any of the circumstances, principles, or feelings of the age in which it appeared. In truth, one of the great distinctions of the Gospel, is, that it did not *grow*. The conception which filled the mind of Jesus, of a religion more spiritual, generous, comprehensive, and unworldly than Judaism, and destined to take its place, was not of gradual formation. We detect no signs of it, and no efforts to realise it before his time; nor is there an appearance of its having been gradually matured by Jesus himself. Christianity

was delivered from the first in its full proportions, in a style of singular freedom and boldness, and without a mark of painful elaboration. The suddenness with which this religion broke forth, this maturity of the system at the very moment of its birth, this absence of gradual development, seems to me a strong mark of its divine original. If Christianity be a human invention, then I can be pointed to something in the history of the age, which impelled and fitted the mind of its author to its production; then I shall be able to find some germ of it, some approximation to it, in the state of things amidst which it first appeared. How was it, that from thick darkness there burst forth at once meridian light? Were I told that the sciences of the civilized world had sprung up to perfection at once amidst a barbarous horde, I should pronounce it incredible. Nor can I easily believe, that Christianity, the religion of unbounded love, a religion which broke down the barrier between Jew and Gentile, and the barriers between nations, which proclaimed one Universal Father, which abolished forms, and substituted the worship of the soul, which condemned alike the false greatness of the Roman, and the false holiness of the Jew, and which taught an elevation of virtue, that the growing knowledge of succeeding ages has made more admirable;—I say, I cannot easily believe that such a religion was suddenly, immediately struck out by human ingenuity, among a people distinguished by bigotry and narrowness of spirit, by superstitious reliance on outward worship, by hatred and scorn of other nations, and by the proud impatient hope of soon binding all nations to their sway.

Christianity, I repeat it, was not the growth of the age in which it appeared. It had no sympathy with that age. It was the echo of no sect or people. It stood alone at the moment of its birth. It used not a word of conciliation. It stooped to no error or passion. It had its own tone, the tone of authority and superiority to the world. It struck at the root of what was everywhere called glory, reversed the judgments of all former ages, passed a condemning sentence on the idols of this world's admiration, and held forth as the perfection of human nature, a spirit of love, so pure and divine, so free and full, so mild and forgiving, so invincible in fortitude, yet so tender in its sympathies, that even now few comprehend it in its extent and elevation. Such a religion had not its origin in this world.

I have thus sought to unfold one of the evidences of Christianity. Its incongruity with the age of its birth; its freedom from earthly mixtures; its original, unborrowed, solitary greatness; and the suddenness with which it broke forth amidst the general gloom; these are to me strong indications of its divine descent. I cannot reconcile them with a human origin.

Having stated the argument in favour of Christianity, derived from the impossibility of accounting for it by the state of the world at the time of its birth; I proceed, in the second place, to observe, that it cannot be accounted for by any of the motives which instigate men to the fabrication of religions. Its aims and objects are utterly irreconcilable with imposture. They are pure, lofty, and worthy of the most illustrious delegate of heaven. This argument deserves to be unfolded with some particularity.

Men act from motives. The inventors of religions have purposes to answer by them. Some systems have been framed by legislators to procure reverence to their laws, to bow the minds of the people to the civil power; and some have been forged by priests, to establish their sway over the multitude, to form themselves into a dominant caste, and to extort the wealth of the industrious. Now I affirm, that Christianity cannot be ascribed to any selfish, ambitious earthly motive. It is suited to no private end. Its purpose is generous and elevated, and thus bears witness to its heavenly origin.

The great object which has seduced men to pretend to inspiration, and to spread false religions, has been Power in one form or another: sometimes political power, sometimes spiritual, sometimes both. Is Christianity to be explained by this selfish aim? I answer, No. I affirm, that the love of power is the last principle to be charged on the Founder of our religion. Christianity is distinguished by nothing more than by its earnest enforcement of a meek and humble spirit, and by its uncompromising reprobation of that passion for dominion, which had, in all ages, made the many the prey of the few, and had been worshipped as the attribute and the impulse of the greatest minds. Its tone on this subject was original and altogether its own. Jesus felt as none had felt before, and as few feel now, the baseness of selfish ambition, and the grandeur of that benevolence which waves every mark of superiority, that it may more effectually bless mankind.

He taught this lesson, not only in the boldest language, but accommodating himself to the emblematical mode of religious instruction prevalent in the East, he set before his disciples a little child as their pattern, and himself washed their feet. His whole life was a commentary on his teaching. Not a trace of the passion for distinction and sway can be detected in the artless narratives of his historians. He wore no badge of superiority, exacted no signs of homage, coveted no attentions, resented no neglect. He discouraged the ruler who prostrated himself before him with flattering salutations, but received with affectionate sensibility the penitent who bathed his feet with her tears. He lived with his obscure disciples as a friend, and mixed freely with all ranks of the community. He placed himself in the way of scorn, and advanced to meet a death more suited than any other imaginable event to entail infamy on his name. Stronger marks of an infinite superiority to what the world calls glory, cannot be conceived than we meet in the history of Jesus.

I have named two kinds of power, Political and Spiritual, as the ordinary objects of false religions. I wish to show you more particularly the elevation of Christianity above these aims. That the gospel was not framed for political purposes, is too plain to require proof; but its peculiarity in this respect, is not sufficiently considered. In ancient times, religion was every where a national concern. In Judea, the union between religion and government was singularly close; and political sovereignty was one of the chief splendours with which the Jewish imagination had surrounded the expected Messiah. That in such an age and country, a religion should arise which hardly seems to know that government exists; which makes no reference to it except in a few general inculcations of obedience to the civil powers; which says not a word, nor throws out a hint of allying itself with the state; which assumes to itself no control of political affairs, and intermeddles with no public concerns; which has no tendency, however indirect, to accumulate power in particular hands; which provides no form of national worship as a substitute for those which it was intended to destroy, and which treats the distinctions of rank and office, as worthless in comparison with moral influence and an unostentatious charity; that such a religion should spring up in such a state of the world, is a remarkable fact. We here

see a broad line between Christianity and other systems, and a striking proof of its originality and elevation. Other systems were framed for communities; Christianity approached men as individuals. It proposed, not the glory of the state, but the perfection of the individual mind. So far from being contrived to build up political power, Christianity tends to reduce and gradually to supplant it, by teaching men to substitute the sway of truth and love for menace and force, by spreading through all ranks a feeling of brotherhood, altogether opposed to the spirit of domination, and by establishing principles which nourish self-respect in every human being, and teach the obscurest to look with an undazzled eye on the most powerful of their race.

Christianity bears no mark of the hands of a politician. One of its main purposes is, to extinguish the very spirit which the ambitious statesman most anxiously cherishes, and on which he founds his success. It proscribes a narrow patriotism, shows no mercy to the spirit of conquest, requires its disciples to love other countries as truly as their own, and enjoins a spirit of peace and forbearance, in language so broad and earnest, that not a few of its professors consider war in every shape and under all circumstances, as a crime. The hostility between Christianity and all the political maxims of that age, cannot easily be comprehended at the present day. No doctrines were then so rooted, as that conquest was the chief interest of a nation, and that an exclusive patriotism was the first and noblest of social virtues. Christianity, in loosening the tie which bound man to the state, that it might connect him with his race, opposed itself to what was deemed the vital principle of national safety and grandeur, and commenced a political revolution, as original and unsparing as the religious and moral reform at which it aimed.

Christianity, then, was not framed for political purposes. But I shall be asked, whether it stands equally clear of the charge of being intended to accumulate spiritual power. Some may ask, whether its Founder was not instigated by the passion for religious domination, whether he did not aim to subdue men's minds, to dictate to the faith of the world, to make himself the leader of a spreading sect, to stamp his name as a prophet on human history, and thus to secure the prostration of multitudes to his will, more abject and entire than kings and conquerors can achieve.

To this, I might reply by what I have said of the character of Jesus, and of the spirit of his religion. It is plain that the Founder of Christianity had a perception quite peculiar to himself, of the moral beauty and greatness of a disinterested, meek, and self-sacrificing spirit; and such a person was not likely to meditate the subjugation of the world to himself. But leaving this topic, I observe, that, on examining Christianity, we discover none of the features of a religion framed for spiritual domination. One of the infallible marks of such a system is, that it makes some terms with the passions and prejudices of men. It does not, cannot provoke and ally against itself all the powers, whether civil or religious, of the world. Christianity was throughout uncompromising and exasperating, and threw itself in the way of hatred and scorn. Such a system was any thing but a scheme for seizing the spiritual empire of the world.

There is another mark of a religion which springs from the love of spiritual domination. It infuses a servile spirit. Its author, desirous to stamp his name and image on his followers, has an interest in curbing the free action of their minds—imposes on them arbitrary doctrines—fastens on them badges which may separate them from others, and besets them with rules, forms, and distinctive observances, which may perpetually remind them of their relation to their chief. Now, I see nothing in Christianity of this enslaving legislation. It has but one aim, which is, not to exalt its teacher, but to improve the disciple—not to fasten Christ's name on mankind, but to breathe into them his spirit of universal love. Christianity is not a religion of forms. It has but two ceremonies, as simple as they are expressive; and these hold so subordinate a place in the New Testament, that some of the best Christians question or deny their permanent obligation. Neither is it a narrow creed, or a mass of doctrines which find no support in our rational nature. It may be summed up in a few great, universal, immutable principles, which reason and conscience, as far as they are unfolded, adopt and rejoice in, as their own everlasting laws, and which open perpetually enlarging views to the mind. As far as I am a Christian, I am free. My religion lays on me not one chain. It does not prescribe a certain range for my mind, beyond which nothing can be learned. It speaks of God as the Universal Father, and sends me to

all his works for instruction. It does not hem me round with a mechanical ritual—does not enjoin forms, attitudes, and hours of prayer—does not descend to details of dress and food—does not put on me one outward badge. It teaches and enkindles love to God, but commands no precise expressions of this sentiment. It prescribes prayer, but lays the chief stress on the prayer of the closet, and treats all worship as worthless, but that of the mind and heart. It teaches us to do good, but leaves us to devise for ourselves the means by which we may best serve mankind. In a word, the whole religion of Christ may be summed up in the love of God and of mankind; and it leaves the individual to cherish and express this spirit by the methods most accordant with his own condition and peculiar mind. Christianity is eminently the religion of freedom. The views which it gives of the parental, impartial, universal goodness of God, and of the equal right of every human being to inquire into his will, and its inculcations of candour, forbearance, and mutual respect, contribute alike to freedom of thought, and enlargement of the heart. I repeat it—Christianity lays on me no chains. It is any thing but a contrivance for spiritual domination.

I am aware that I shall be told, that Christianity, if judged by its history, has no claim to the honourable title of a religion of liberty. I shall be told, that no system of heathenism ever weighed more oppressively on men's souls; that the Christian ministry has trained tyrants, who have tortured now the body with material fire, and now the mind with the dread of fiercer flames; and who have proscribed and punished free thought and free speech as the worst of crimes. I have no disposition to soften the features of priestly oppression; but I say, let not Christianity be made to answer for it. Christianity gives its ministers no such power. They have usurped it in the face of the sternest prohibitions, and in opposition to the whole spirit of their Master. Christianity institutes no priesthood, in the original and proper sense of that word. It has not the name of priest among its officers; nor does it confer a shadow of priestly power. It invests no class of men with peculiar sanctity—ascribing to their intercessions a special influence over God, or suspending the salvation of the private Christian on ceremonies which they alone can administer. Jesus, indeed, appointed



twelve of his immediate disciples, to be the great instruments of propagating his religion; but nothing can be simpler than their office. They went forth to make known through all nations, the life, death, resurrection, and teachings of Jesus Christ; and this truth they spread freely and without reserve. They did not give it as a mystery to a few who were to succeed them in their office, and according to whose direction it was to be imparted to others. They communicated it to the whole body of converts, to be their equal and common property; thus securing to all, the invaluable rights of the mind. It is true, they appointed ministers or teachers in the various congregations which they formed; and in that early age, when the religion was new and unknown, and when oral teaching was the only mode of communicating it, there seems to have been no way for its diffusion, but this appointment of the most enlightened disciples to the work of instruction. But the New Testament nowhere intimates, that those men were to monopolize the privilege of studying their religion, or of teaching it to others. Not a single man can claim, under Christianity, the right to interpret it exclusively, or to impose his interpretation on his brethren. The Christian minister enjoys no nearer access to God, and no promise of more immediate illumination than other men. He is not entrusted with the Christian records more than they; and by these records, it is both their right and duty to try his instructions. I have here pointed out a noble peculiarity of Christianity. It is the religion of liberty. It is in no degree tainted with the passion for spiritual power. "Call no man master, for ye are all brethren," is its free and generous inculcation, and to every form of freedom it is a friend and defence.

We have seen that Christianity is not to be traced to the love of power, that master-passion in the authors of false religions. I add, that no other object of a selfish nature could have led to its invention. The Gospel is not of this world. At the time of its origin, no ingenuity could have brought it to bear on any private or worldly interest. Its spirit is self-denial. Wealth, ease, and honour, it counts among the chief perils of life, and it insists on no duty more earnestly than on that of putting them to hazard, and casting them from us, if the cause of truth and humanity so require. And these maxims were not mere speculations, or rhetorical common-places in the times of

**Christ and his Apostles.** The first propagators of Christianity were called upon to practise what they preached—to forego every interest on its account. They could not but foreknow that a religion so uncompromising and pure, would array against them the world. They did not merely take the chance of suffering, but were sure that the whole weight of scorn, pain, and worldly persecution, would descend on their heads. How inexplicable, then, is Christianity by any selfish object, or any low aim.

The Gospel has but one object, and that too plain to be mistaken. In reading the New Testament, we see the greatest simplicity of aim. There is no lurking purpose, no by-end betraying itself through attempts to disguise it. A perfect singleness of design runs through the records of the religion, and is no mean evidence of their truth. This end of Christianity is the moral perfection of the human soul. It aims, and it tends in all its doctrines, precepts, and promises, to rescue men from the power of moral evil; to unite them to God by filial love, and to one another in the bonds of brotherhood; to inspire them with a philanthropy as meek and unconquerable as that of Christ, and to kindle intense desire, hope, and pursuit of celestial and immortal virtue.

And now I ask, what is the plain inference from these views? If Christianity can be traced to no selfish or worldly motive—if it was framed, not for dominion, not to compass any private purpose, but to raise men above themselves, and to conform them to God, can we help pronouncing it worthy of God? And to whom but to God can we refer its origin? Ought we not to recognise in the first propagators of such a faith, the holiest of men, the friends of their race, and the messengers of Heaven? Christianity, from its very nature, repels the charge of imposture. It carries in itself the proof of pure intention. Bad men could not have conceived it, much less have adopted it as the great object of their lives. The supposition of selfish men giving up every private interest to spread a system which condemned themselves, and which tended only to purify mankind, is an absurdity as gross as can be found in the most irrational faith. Christianity, therefore, when tried by its motives, approves itself to be of God.

(To be continued in our next.)

*On the Importance of adhering to Acknowledged Principles in the Interpretation of the Scriptures.—No. 5.*

It, as has been stated in the preceding Number, death, in the plain and full acceptation of the term, is the penalty annexed to sin, it follows, that a resurrection from death to immortality, is a complete deliverance from that penalty; and consequently, the Christian revelation which “abolishes death, and brings life and immortality to light,” which, in the person of our Saviour himself, presents the proof, the pledge, and the pattern of a resurrection of the man from the insensibility of the grave, to a spiritual, a celestial, and immortal existence, exactly meets and completely removes the evil annexed to sin. Man “dies and returns to his dust;” and from this “dust of death,” “Christ, the first fruits,” was recalled to life, and translated to a state in which “he dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.” This was the “deliverance of life,” which he himself experienced, and which he is authorised to impart to his species, as they shall attain to a moral fitness for its reception.

Here I must confess myself considerably embarrassed in proceeding upon the ground of admitted opinions in the interpretation of the Scriptures. For the opinions which are generally admitted and maintained with respect to the nature of death, the punishment of sin, the means of redemption, and the future state, are so different and discordant, that it is impossible to make a consistent appeal to one admitted principle, without requiring the rejection of another which stands opposed to it. The whole inquiry, however, seems to hinge upon the solution of two questions: What is death? What is everlasting life? - All who adopt the Scriptures as the guides of their faith, will probably admit, in general terms, that there is an intimate connection between sin and death, and between moral righteousness and everlasting life, in some sense of those expressions. But while it is admitted, that Adam was sentenced to “return to his dust,” on occasion of his transgression, and the same is the fate of all mankind; it is farther confidently and very generally maintained, that “the soul can never die,” that it is by nature immortal, and that upon its separation from the body, it passes into its state either of reward or punishment; and since it is indestructible, these states are by many sup-

posed to be alike endless. As inconsistencies persisted in, are apt to give rise to hypotheses more monstrous than either of the opposing tenets held separately, so what has been adopted as the "orthodox" idea of death, regarded as the punishment of sin, is the most horrible that imagination can conceive: that "all mankind inheriting the nature of their ancestor, are totally corrupt, and destined, unless redeemed by a peculiar sacrifice, to endure eternal torments!" If, however, there is any meaning in language, as well as any reality in the divine attributes, this is utterly at variance with the sentence which the Almighty has actually denounced upon sin; its consequence is the *extinction* of life and consciousness, not its *perpetuation* in endless misery.

Let this principle be consistently admitted, and we can proceed with the utmost satisfaction to the reception of that "light of life," which is opened to us by the Gospel. It will then indeed be seen to be most appropriately denominated "the glorious Gospel of the ever blessed God;" since no tidings can be so truly joyful, or can be brought into the least comparison as the subject of rejoicing, to erring mortals, with the assurance that in proportion as they become purified from sin, they may look forward to a state from which mortality with all its attendant evils, will be finally and for ever removed. The sentence of "condemnation" will be taken off; even sinners will not only be recalled to life, but restored to its possession as beings *capable* of "living unto God;" of being delivered from sin, and consequently from the very condition of mortals; that is, of attaining to everlasting life, the great blessing of God upon exalted virtue! The unfounded supposition that the human soul is constituted immortal in the present state, has operated greatly to cheapen our ideas of so transcendent a blessing as that of immortality, and even totally to pervert the opinions generally entertained by Christian professors concerning it. If creatures so imperfect in a moral and intellectual point of view; liable to so many errors and vices, and to so much infirmity and suffering, as human beings in this state generally are, were possessed of immortal souls; and especially, were their moral nature so radically corrupt, that their very immortality would be the source of their everlasting misery; it is no wonder that nothing very elevated or cheering should be attached to the idea. But where in the Scriptures do

we read that sinners are immortal creatures, or are possessed of immortal souls? or that any human beings in the present state are in the actual possession of immortality, with respect to their souls any more than to their corporeal frames? Are we not on the contrary expressly assured, that "the soul that sinneth it shall die." Are not all men, not excepting the distinguished patriarchs, represented by the most humiliating expressions, indicative at once of their morally humble and perishing condition? See the prayer of Moses, setting forth the frailty and brevity of life, as the attendant on its sins, Ps. xc. See David describing "man at his best estate as altogether vanity," Ps. xxxix. See Abraham declaring himself to be "dust and ashes," though manifesting the spirit of a virtuous philanthropist; and the pious Job himself acknowledging that "corruption" is his "father," and "the worm his mother and sister;" and speaking in the same terms of mankind in general. Surely it may be asserted with the utmost confidence, that these men would have deemed it the height of absurdity, to assert that the beings, whom they depict in terms of such unqualified humiliation, are actually possessed of immortal souls! They evidently considered man to be a dying, because he is a morally erring and offending creature; this last being the leading subject of their confession, without which, indeed, the frailty of the physical frame could be no proper ground of such confessions; but they plainly view this as the visible index of a corresponding frailty in the moral and vital powers. Turning to the New Testament, do we not every where see a full and complete deliverance from corruption and death, represented as the blessing graciously held forth by God to his faithful, though erring servants and "children in the spirit of holiness" hereafter? Is there any ambiguity in the phrase *everlasting* or *eternal life*, as employed in those writings? The reader, by turning to his Concordance, will readily trace that in *every* instance in which this phrase is employed, and also in which the term *life* is used with reference to a future state, the happiness which God has appointed as his highest blessing upon good men, and their complete deliverance from evil, is uniformly included in the idea of this perpetuity of animated being, and regarded as its inseparable attendant. They occur upwards of eighty times, and either these or similar phrases indicative of an ever-during, "unfading," incorruptible, or immortal life, a "spiritual" life, as opposed

to that of "flesh and blood," are the phrases constantly employed to denote the future well-being of man.

But why do I thus argue as if I were contending with an opposing sentiment; there is something so Proteus-like in the prevailing opinions, that they can with ease assume the most opposite appearances. While it is maintained that all human souls are *immortal*; and by the "orthodox," that *as such* they are by nature fitted only for eternal misery; it will also be asserted by the same lips, that *everlasting life* is the destined reward of the saints in heaven! How equivocal, alas! is the use of language upon subjects of the last importance. Our modern theological vocabulary has become so confused, that corresponding terms may be applied to states of being, infinitely opposed to each other; to a state of well-being, the attendant and blessing upon the most exalted virtue; and to a state of infinite vengeance against the rejected part of mankind! Whence is this confusion, but from confounding things which are represented with great simplicity and force in the Scriptures? According to *them*, life means precisely what we experience it to be, a state of vital conscious being, resulting from the due organization of the bodily frame, and the due action of the elements upon it; and this in its purity and perfection, unalloyed by disease, decay, or disorder of any kind, yields as its natural result, enjoyment—the reward and accompaniment of a well-regulated and vigorous exertion of the moral powers. *Death* is the *privation* of life; the extinction of that "pleasing conscious" existence, on which, in proportion to its purity and good government, all well-being depends. *This* therefore is "the king of terrors," inasmuch as it is the very opposite of that *undying* state, the glorious prospect of which is opened by the gospel. That state therefore can never exist *in* death, as the heathens vainly imagined; it is only by a resurrection of the person, and its translation to a state in which it can no more suffer dissolution, that this prospect can be realised; and that not in union with moral disorder, but only as the moral characters of men, become fitted for the reception of so transcendent a blessing.

The present state being one of mingled good and evil, both physical and moral, terminating in death, and the scale of moral and physical good and evil not being duly adjusted, there arises some difficulty in determining the

happiness attendant upon life in its perfection and purity, and its intimate connection with moral excellence. In general, however, it may be seen, that the healthful preservation and enjoyment of life, has a natural connection with the proper exercise of its powers and the due use of its blessings; and that all moral disorder tends to enfeeble, embitter, and abbreviate life. How absurd and incredible, then, is the position, that there is a perpetuity of vital, conscious being, which is wholly unconnected with the only useful ends of its existence; and how wildly extravagant that tenet which asserts the same perpetuity of conscious existence, in connection with the ceaseless *abuse* of its powers, and the total blight and most dreadful reversion of all its blessings!

(No. 5 to be concluded in our next.)

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### *On the Moral Constitution and History of Man.*

#### PART II.—CHAPTER II.

(Concluded from page 272.)

THESE teachers, who had no authority to which they could appeal, nor any miracles to authenticate their imaginary revelations, were forced to lay claim to a peculiar illumination; the fruit it might be supposed of superior intellect and genius. Hence they were called Gnostics, an imposing appellation, no doubt, in their day, but which we would call visionaries in our day. It was a favourite notion among the earliest of these Christian Gnostics, that Christ was one of those celestial æons (as they called them), of whom they supposed there was a great family in heaven, and who had assumed the *appearance* of a man, but who in reality had no substantial body, and consequently no character and feelings strictly human; and that his death on the cross, in particular, was a mere illusion. The opinions of these Gnostics are thought to be expressly alluded to and condemned by John in his gospel and epistles. But whatever we may think of this, it is clear that his doctrine is in direct contradiction to theirs, for he asserts and proves most distinctly, and more particularly than any other Evangelist, that Jesus was indeed flesh and blood as we are. The authority of John probably quashed some of the more childish and extravagant conceits of the Gnostics; but the question having been once started what Christ was, in reference to his person, it was not suffered

to rest, and shortly afterwards this question concerning the person of Christ, involving the doctrine of the Trinity, entirely engrossed the attention of the Church.

The race of Gnostics, however, are easily distinguished from the succeeding race of Dialecticians, who endeavoured to define the *person* of Christ, and to fathom what they called the mysteries connected with the Arian and Trinitarian controversies, by means of logic. The Gnostics belonged to the school of the imagination, and followed or imitated the reveries of the Oriental Platonic philosophy. The Dialecticians belonged to the school of Aristotle, and of intellect, or metaphysics. The first topic, to be sure, which occupied them, namely, the controversy about the Trinity, was partly affected by the previous notions of Platonism; but in so far as it was a question of Scriptural criticism, it was an intellectual exercise, and this exercise was further pushed on, into investigations about "the innate corruption and depravity of man; his natural ability to live according to the Divine law; the nature and necessity of Divine grace, and the question of liberty and necessity." (Mosheim, cent. v.) Of these questions we shall speak afterwards, meantime the completely fanciful character of the Gnostic philosophy may be learned from the following accounts of the opinions of two of the earliest among them, by Mosheim.

Cerinthus taught (cent. i.) "That the Creator of this world, who was also the Lawgiver of the Jews, was a Being of the greatest virtues, but subordinate to the Supreme God. Having fallen from his virtuous estate, God determined to destroy his empire, and for that purpose sent one of the ever-happy and glorious *æons*, whose name was Christ: this Christ chose for his habitation Jesus, descending upon him in the form of a dove. Jesus after this union, opposed himself with vigour to the God of the Jews (the Creator of the world), and was by his instigation seized and crucified. But when Jesus was taken captive, Christ ascended up on high, so that the man Jesus alone suffered death."

Valentine taught (cent. ii.), "that in the *pleroma* or habitation of the Supreme Deity, *thirty* *æons* dwelt, of which the one-half were *male*, the other *female*. To these he added four others, *viz.* Horus, or the guardian of the borders of the *pleroma*, Christ, the Holy Ghost, and Jesus. The youngest of the *æons*, called Sophia



(wisdom), conceived an ardent desire of comprehending the nature of the Supreme Being, and by force of this propensity, brought forth a daughter called Achamoth. This lady being exiled from the pleroma, fell down into the rude and undigested mass of Chaos, to which she gave some arrangement, and by the help of Jesus, produced the Demiurge—the Lord and Creator of the world. This personage created all things, and also man composed of a soul and body, to which Achamoth added a *spiritual and celestial substance*."

Such were the crude fancies by which the Gnostics attempted to explain the ways of God. Though frequently defeated, the spirit still sprang up in some new and varied form, particularly in the speculations of Manes, a Persian, who added to his conceits some of the more peculiar tenets of the Oriental philosophy, about the two eternal principles of good and evil, of light and darkness. And in different shapes and degrees, these heresies, as they were called, continued occasionally in the Church, during the whole of the middle ages.

Their chief prevalence, however, was during the three first centuries. In the fourth century, they gave place to the controversies about the Trinity, &c.

I do not mean to give, nor to assume in this place, any opinion about the merits of the various controversies to which this question gave rise; but as the practical fruits of them, *in the mode in which they were managed*, were wrath, contention, and bloodshed, we are authorised to infer that there was some great mistake about the statement, or about the importance attached to the matters at issue. Such fruits could not spring from the true doctrine and spirit of Christianity.

And here, in regard to the point of *importance*, let us fall back, for a moment, upon the Moral Doctrine of Christianity, and recollect its superior importance to every thing else. The three early Evangelists who recorded that doctrine, involving all that was known to the first generation of Christians, have scarcely preserved the traces of any of those discourses of our Lord, published by John; and which reveal all that we can learn concerning what is called the *person* of Christ. Ought we not to infer from this, that the doctrine of our Lord's *person* is inferior in point of practical use and importance to the doctrine of his *morality*? I do not mean, that, like the

Atonement, it is to be superseded by the Morality; but it should, in all cases, be *preceded* by the moral doctrine. We can never be expected to comprehend the character of Christ, in its more recondite principles, till we have imbibed his moral spirit, and be renewed in his moral image. The doctrine of his person ought to be investigated with the greatest candour and humility. It is difficult, and above us, in many respects. It can only be entertained properly, by persons who have made some proficiency in his morality. It belongs to *them*, and not to the *world*. "He that hath done the will of God, shall know the doctrine." It is a thing better conveyed to a pure and experienced mind, in the words of Scripture, than it can be by logical definitions and metaphysical distinctions. In truth, such attempts are only like darkening counsel by words without knowledge. Yet it was in such a manner that the controversies on the subject *were managed*, and that, too, by persons notoriously deficient in charity, in temper, yea, even in decency and common justice. It was an intrusion of profane persons into the most holy place. And God struck them with blindness, and made them wander to weariness in the labyrinths of their own foolish disputations.

The numberless sects and diversities of opinion which arose out of the controversies concerning the *person* of Christ, and the previous dreams of the Gnostics, constitute a prominent part of Church history, but are altogether unworthy the detailed study of any person who values his time. They were followed by a new set of disputes in the fifth and following centuries, about the moral constitution of man; but the disputants having, as yet, no idea of the true theory, and pursuing their investigations under the influence of an intolerant theology, and of a captious logic, they made no progress in the subject, or rather they involved it, as they did other topics, in greater darkness and intricacy. The decay of learning among the Romans, and the subsequent conquest of the empire by barbarians, increased the general ignorance, and sunk the contending visionaries and dialecticians into deeper and deeper absurdities. But all these absurdities they attempted to dignify with the name of orthodox doctrine; that is, each party assumed themselves to be exclusively orthodox, and it was only the *accident* of the one or the other having the majority, which decided their right to that appellation—

an accident that was frequently determined by the caprice or the fortune of an emperor, a king, a bishop, or some eminent polemic. The examples and opinions of such persons, frequently changed the whole face of the subject with the ignorant multitude.

Now all this confusion, and the evils springing out of it, were consequent on a certain fundamental principle, which it never entered into the mind of any one to dispute, *viz.* "that the matters about which they were contending, were essential articles of the Christian religion, and necessary to obtain the favour of God." They had completely forgotten that the true and essential doctrine of Christianity—namely, its moral doctrine, was entirely unconnected with their dreams and controversies; but this was above their capacity to feel and to comprehend.

In another point of view, the chief and radical cause of all these mistakes about the true nature and object of Christianity, arose from the *age* of the public mind, as not yet having its intellectual and moral faculties matured; and this immaturity was prolonged for many centuries by the conquests of the barbarians, and by the suppression of all the arts and sciences of civilized life. In such "times of ignorance" and of social childhood, men only searched after truth by the light of an unbridled imagination, or by the wranglings of a crude and conceited logic. And even in that way, few thought for themselves. All ranged themselves under the standard of some eminent leader, and contended not so much with the enthusiasm of personal conviction, as with the blind devotion of a faction, attached merely to a name, or to a shibboleth.

I have adverted more than once, to this view of the progress of the general mind through the region of imagination and intellect, as illustrating its history. It may be useful in this stage, to dwell a little more particularly on the evidence of this doctrine displayed in the character of the middle ages.

The tribe of Gnostics, as we have said, sprung up at the very commencement of the Christian era, and their principles had prevailed before they assumed a Christian dress. At that time, the imaginative systems of philosophy—the Oriental and Platonic, were in vogue. But the controversies resulting from what was called the Arian question, arose in the fourth century. These controversies, in their progress, were modified by the increasing credit

and prevalence of the Aristotelian philosophy, or the method of Aristotle's dialectic and logic in the discussion of all questions of theology and morals.

"The credit of the Platonic philosophy (says Mosheim, cent. v.) in the first centuries, did not prevent the doctrine of Aristotle from coming to light after a long struggle, and forcing its way into the Christian Church. The writings of Aristotle (particularly his *Dialectics*) were recommended to such of the youth as had a taste for logical discussions, and were fond of disputing. In this, the Christian doctors imitated the manner of the heathen schools, and thus was the first step to that universal dominion, which the Stagirite afterwards obtained in the republic of letters. This predilection for the Aristotelian philosophy, which had commenced with some of the opponents of Origen (a great visionary, although a man of talent and genius), was greatly increased during the Arian, Eutychian, Nestorian, and Pelagian controversies. These controversies were managed, or rather drawn out, on both sides, by a perpetual recourse to subtle distinctions and captious sophisms. And no philosophy was so proper to furnish such weapons, as that of Aristotle; for that of Plato was far from being adapted to form the mind to the polemic arts."

This is a pretty clear evidence, that the state of religion was affected by the state of philosophy. In other words, that the moral sentiments of mankind depend upon the development of their mental faculties. Our historian, indeed, seems to insinuate that the prevailing disputes on theology, imposed the taste for a specific philosophy; but probably he did not reflect on the other view of the subject, and meant merely to state the fact of their connexion. At any rate, the fact is all we are bound to take upon the authority of a historian; and the subsequent progress of the public taste for the Aristotelian philosophy, sufficiently proves, that it proceeded from the condition of the existing intellectual attainments of the world.

After having been employed in the controversies about the *person* of Christ, in which it was partially blended with the Platonic philosophy, the logic of Aristotle was more exclusively applied in the investigation of what were called the Pelagian heresies. These did not admit of so much room for the exercise of the imagination, as of the reasoning powers; being versant about the moral

character and history of man. I mean, that the Pelagian questions did not admit of the same room for fancy, as the Arian and Gnostic. But they were still treated with an abundant mixture of fanciful conceits. The progress, however, forward in the march of intellect, beyond imagination, was obvious; so that from the Pelagian questions, the schools proceeded at a later date to the *duties* of man, and treated of them in that style of acute logical distinction and definition, which was ultimately embodied in the systems of Casuistry. Nor was it alone on topics of theology and morals, that the learned of those ages delighted to exercise their dialective powers. Questions of all sorts, many of them absurd and ludicrous, some of them even indecent, occupied their attention. At length, as if it were for want of external topics, the logic of Aristotle was turned upon itself, and a controversy about the nature of its categories (or classes into which things were divided by Aristotle) was carried on with the most violent animosity in every kingdom of Europe. One party asserted that the categories were *real things* or substances; the other asserted that they were mere *names*, adopted for the sake of convenient classification. The first sect was called Realists, and the second Nominalists, and these parties were as eager in disputing and sometimes fighting for their opinions, as were the proper theologians.

The history of the Saracens in the East, during the same period, confirms our observation respecting the intellectual state of the world in those days. They had imbibed a taste for learning, and prosecuted it more successfully than the Christians for several centuries. For, while the whole of Europe was in a state of anarchy and ignorance, the flourishing empires of the Caliphs at Bagdad and of the Moors in Spain, cultivated the arts and sciences of civilised life; and among other studies, that of the Aristotelian philosophy received a distinguished attention.

It was not, to be sure, applied to such silly disputes, as among the Christians, and it was associated with the elements of that more perfect philosophy, which received the name of the *inductive* after the days of Bacon. This new philosophy, was not, indeed, formally distinguished, and was but obscurely understood; but the collection of facts, and the practical mode of experiments, was commenced, and applied to the study of physic and of che-

mistry. What of the sciences of mathematics and astronomy known to the ancients, was about the same time revived, and the grand improvement in arithmetic, by using figures instead of letters, was introduced. I have made these remarks about the Saracens, to show, that from the ninth to the twelfth century, and after the Platonic or imaginative philosophy had been in a great measure abandoned in the schools of Europe, in favour of the Aristotelian—the same cause, and which was independent of religious controversies (as an exciting motive), had recommended this philosophy also to the attention of a totally different people.

All this not only illustrates our doctrine about the successive development of the human faculties, but it gives a certain order and connection to the confused mass of events and controversies with which the ecclesiastical history of the middle ages is filled; and without reference to which, it is scarcely worth while to wade through it, and very difficult to preserve the recollection.

SALTCOATS, April, 1833.

W. B.

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## REVIEW.

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*The Literary History of Galloway; by Thomas Murray, A. M. 2d Edition. Edinburgh 1832. Printed for Waugh & Innes.*

THE writer of this work is of the sacred profession, and appears to be an orthodox churchman. But he is a fair, impartial man, of good sense and of good feelings, from whose heart the gloomy creed of Calvin has not expelled the milk of human kindness. The work consists of a series of biographical sketches of eminent persons connected with Galloway. It displays great research and very accurate information; is written in a very perspicuous style, and with great felicity of expression; and is, on the whole, one of the most entertaining biographical volumes we have ever met with. When we say that the author's prepossessions occasionally appear, we say *that* which is true of all such compositions; but he has evidently no disposition to "set down aught in malice," or to sacrifice truth wilfully at the shrine of party, or of theological or political partialities. His greatest error is that of being occasionally rather too favourable to the subjects of his sketches; but it is not to such an extent as to be any impeachment of his candour. It rather seems to arise from a generous desire, to think as well as possible of the illustrious dead, which, tempered as it is by a sound judgment and an honest purpose, is, in a biographer, a failing that "leans to virtue's side."

The history of the Reformation in Scotland, of which we find many interesting sketches in the work before us, is replete with

instruction, and various moral inferences are drawn from it by various classes of readers. Some discover in it a confirmation of the accuracy of their own theological opinions. They point to the martyrdom of Wishart, and to the heroic struggles of Knox and Welsh against every species of opposition, and then say triumphantly, let no one presume to impugn doctrines held by these men, and consecrated by their magnanimous and disinterested sacrifices. But it is evident, that if this argument is worth any thing, it is equally valid as a proof of the soundness of the opinions of Servetus, of Biddle, and of Elwall. Each sect may employ it in turn, for unhappily there are few that cannot produce a list of martyrs and of persecuted confessors. Besides, our reformers did not suffer for those opinions which distinguished them from other Protestants, but for their opposition to the spiritual dictation of the Church of Rome. Their martyrdom was a proof of the sincerity of their zeal in the *pursuit* of truth, but by no means of their success in attaining it. The modern inheritors of the creed of these venerated champions of the rights of conscience, have too frequently displayed a spirit more akin to that of the Beaton and the Sharpes of former times than to theirs. They have set themselves forth as the abettors of an *unerring* if not, *infallible* church, and have inflicted every species of temporal disadvantage, which the laws of their country and the spirit of the times would admit, upon men of sterling integrity, whose only offence was that of the early Reformers, a refusal to submit to human dictation in matters of religious belief. If the secrets of men's hearts could be laid open, it would generally appear, that persecutors for conscience' sake, are not sincere fanatics, but wolves in sheep's clothing, who, attracted by the temporalities of established churches, put on the guise of a zeal which they do not really feel, in order to attain to an undeserved and pernicious eminence. There is, at least, this advantage in an unpopular and unprivileged religion, that men of this stamp have no inducement to enter into its service. The character drawn by Dr. Cook, of Beaton (the uncle of the Cardinal), is a sufficiently characteristic delineation of that of some men in our times. "Principle had over his decision no influence, and it is impossible to acquit him of the heavy charge of having hypocritically sacrificed, under pretence of regard to what he despised, men who were guided by the conviction of their understanding, and who obeyed the suggestion of conscience." Ye advocates of an exclusive and privileged faith, hear this from one of your own number. Ye recommend it as a duty to "search the Scriptures;" but if the inquirer, after investigation, adopt conclusions different from yours—differing in any respect from a rule of faith of man's device, ye unscrupulously condemn him. Ye cannot surround him, as of old, with fire and faggot, but ye can deprive his family of bread, ye can raise the cry of heresy against those, who, in Dr. Cook's language, are "guided by the conviction of their understanding, and who obey the suggestion of conscience." Ye can turn them out of your synagogues, ye can bar the gates of universities against them, ye can rouse men's fears and prejudices,

so as to monopolise to yourselves all sorts of secular advantages, and to exclude them from every avenue which leads to prosperity and success in life. These things ye *can* do, and these ye daily practise; but the time is coming when none of these arts will avail you, when truth will have fair play, and the artificial bulwarks of error will be pulled down.

But we hope there are those who read the history of our Scottish Reformers with other and with nobler views; who derive from the results of *their* manly struggles, a consolatory conviction that no bulwarks, however ingeniously and artfully contrived, can possibly avail for the protection of error; who imbibe from the same source, an increased confidence in the innate force of truth and reason, under all the apparent disadvantages with which they can possibly be surrounded by the perverse ingenuity of erring man; who imitate the early Reformers, not by the implicit adoption of their opinions, but by the resolution to effect a still farther reformation; who reject their occasional intolerance and bigotry, and copy their glorious and intrepid devotion to the cause of truth and virtue, and to the emancipation of the human mind from theological shackles, and from human authority. To such men, Mr. Murray's pages will present many subjects for agreeable reflection, and much that is calculated to nourish their highest aspirations.

The author commences with some account of St. Ninian, bishop of Candida Casa, whom he supposes to have been born near to Whithorn, in the year 360, and to have been one of the earliest professors of Christianity in the district. He then gives a few traces of the history of the several monastic establishments in Galloway, beginning with that of Whithorn, or Candida Casa. Several remarkable characters, heads of these establishments, are brought into view in connection with the events of the times. We have then a series of lives of eminent Galwegians, from the Reformation downwards to the present period. Among these we have lives of Welsh (son-in-law to John Knox), of Samuel Rutherford, John Livingstone, Viscount Stair, Dr. M'Gill of Ayr, Dr. Murray (the orientalist), Dr. Brown (the metaphysician), Thomas, Earl of Selkirk, and many others.

John Welsh appears to have been a character suited by the energy of his mind, to the troubled period in which he lived. The waywardness and depravity of his youth, were chastened by the bitter fruits which they produced, and the reclaimed prodigal devoted the energies of his mind to the diffusion of the presbyterian religion. He was settled first at Kirkcudbright, and afterwards (about the end of the 16th century) at Ayr. At this period, he had a controversy with a priest, as to the truth of the Roman Catholic religion, in which he seems to have displayed great learning and talent. The following extract from his preface, will serve as an illustration of his character and style of writing. It would suit well, from its quaintness and pithiness, as a motto to some modern controversial work. "I have set downe your answere fullie, and has answered to every poynt and argument severally; the like, Mr. Gilbert, I desire of you, that



if ever you can be able to put your hand to make an answer, that you set downe me word for word, and answers every head and poynt thereof severally, as I have set them downe here, and show what you graunt, and what you denie in euerie head and argument, as I have done in yours; otherwaies I will take it for no answer, bot for a manifest demonstration that ye are conuicted in your conscience of the falsset of your owne religion."

In 1606, Welsh was convicted of treason, by the Court of Justiciary at Linlithgow, in consequence of his honourable resistance to certain tyrannical proceedings of the court, during the preceding year. In this part of the narrative, the arbitrary character of King James the VI.'s government, and the contemptible subserviency of his judges, are made sufficiently manifest. Out of deference to, or rather dread of public opinion, the sentence of death was exchanged for expatriation, and Welsh left this country for France, amidst unequivocal demonstrations of the sympathy of his countrymen. He soon learned the language, and preached in French, first at Nerac, and afterwards at St. Jean D'Angely, which last place he resolutely assisted in defending, when besieged by Lewis XIII. in person, in 1620. This Protestant town at length procured the important concession of the full and free exercise of their religion, and the King was permitted to enter it. Out of deference to the King, and to a law of France which forbade Protestant worship in any place in which his Majesty was personally present, the magistrates dissuaded Welsh from preaching. But on this point he was inflexible. Crowds of both persuasions thronged to listen to him, and the Duke D'Esperon with an armed guard entered the church by the King's orders to arrest him. "Making a pause in his discourse, he ordered a seat to be set for the Marshal of France, and commanded him in the name of God, whose servant he was, not to disturb his worship. The Duke struck with the dignity of Welsh, and the air of authority with which he spoke, involuntarily obeyed his *'commands'*, and listened to the sermon with decorum and seriousness. When the services of the church were over, the Duke brought him before the King, who demanded of him 'how he durst preach, it being against the law to do it so near the King.' 'If your Majesty,' replied Welsh, 'knew what I preach, you would command others and come yourself to hear it; for I preach salvation by Jesus Christ; and I am sure your own conscience tells you that your own works will never merit salvation to you; I preach that there is none on earth above you, which none of those about you that adhere to the Pope will say.' This unexpected reply so pleased the King, that he exclaimed '*Very well; you shall be my minister*,' addressed him by the name of father, and promised him his protection." And at the siege of St. Jean D'Angely, next year, "Lewis ordered M. de Vitry, one of his generals, to plant a guard at Mr. Welsh's house, that he might receive no injury; and soon afterwards himself and his family were conveyed, at his Majesty's expense, to Rochelle."

In consequence of ill health, he solicited from the King permission to return to his native country. His wife, a genuine daughter

of Knox, being requested by James in a personal interview, to persuade him to submit to Episcopal authority, held up her apron to his Majesty, and declared, that she "would rather *kep* (i. e. receive or catch) his head there." He was permitted to return to London, but not to Scotland, till he could not take advantage of the permission. He died in London in 1622, a short time after preaching a sermon, which seems to have hastened his end.

(To be concluded in our next.)

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*Second Edition of Bible Stories, for the Use of Children. Part the 1st.  
By the Rev. Samuel Wood, B.A. London, Simpkin & Marshall.*

FOR two very good reasons, we may claim liberty to express our gratification at the appearance of a second edition of this interesting little volume. We are gratified by the demand for a second edition. We are gratified, too, by the author's having "lengthened several of the stories, inserted some interesting particulars not included in the former edition, and in many passages adhered more closely to the style and the words of Scripture."

These are really valuable improvements. They evince the earnest desire to do good, by which the author must be animated. The benevolent solicitude for the virtuous training of the young, which Mr. Wood has manifested in this, and his other excellent contributions to the treasury for enriching the juvenile mind, and the talent which he has displayed in preparing and presenting these contributions, merit no little praise, and are worthy to receive, and we trust will receive every encouragement.

Let every serious Bible Christian promote, in every possible way, the sale and use of such books, and soon will die away the complaint, that there is a scarcity of rational, interesting, and scriptural books for the children of Unitarian Christians. This accomplished, two incalculably important ends will be gained. The reproach cast upon Unitarians, of being indifferent to the sort of books their children read, will be proved to be undeserved: and children will be conducted by a much more easy, and a far more pleasant path, to that "mountain of the Lord," where they can breathe the pure air of truth, enjoy the sunshine of love, see around them the handiworks and great goodness of their Creator; hear from the mouths of Moses and the Prophets, Christ and his Apostles, the words and promises of their heavenly Father, and feel that they are immortal.

Of the Bible Stories, in their former dress, we expressed our approbation, although we suggested some alterations. In their present improved state, they have our cordial good opinion, and our most hearty commendation to parents, tutors, and friends of youth.

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*A Grammar of Elocution; by the Rev. Samuel Wood, B.A. Teacher of Elocution in the London University School. London, John Taylor, 1833.*

MORE than three thousand years ago, eloquence, or a ready, proper, and efficient manner of speaking, was deemed of so much

importance, that the non-possession of it was considered by Moses a valid objection to his undertaking a mission to Egypt's king, to speak to him on the subject of setting the Israelites free. Moses had doubtless witnessed the magic power of well-delivered addresses. He was afraid he should make no impression on Pharaoh, unless by the aid of elocution.

The great advantages and real necessity of elocution, were clearly perceived, too, by the Grecians and Romans. Isocrates and Demosthenes among the former, and Cicero and Quintilian among the latter, demonstrated that "words work wonders," when rightly employed. And succeeding races of men, have borne constantly accumulating testimony to the great value, mighty agency, and transcendent importance of elocution.

He, therefore, who simplifies the art of speaking, and opens up the principles of that art, and renders the acquisition of elocution easy, deserves no common meed of praise. And this praise is most justly due to Mr. Wood, for the little work now before us. It is a present to the student in elocution, for which he ought to be grateful, and for which he should evince his gratitude, by studying the book, and improving by its instructions.

Mr. Wood's "Introductory Essay" has the merit of being brief, perspicuous, and to the point. The illustrations of "Pause" in Chap. I. are excellent; and it closes with a just and necessary alteration of the old rule,

"Learn to read slow," &c. into

Attend to pause; all other graces

Will follow in their proper places.

The examples and illustrations in Chap. II. on "Inflection," are quite to the purpose. While in Chap. III. the distinction between Harmony and Melody is clearly pointed out.

In the Chapter on "*Quantity*," the characters in music are adopted to exemplify the several lengths of time, that different syllables require in utterance. Those who are familiar with the notes in music, will catch all this portion at a glance, and exclaim *capital!* Those who know nothing of music, and have no inclination to learn, will perhaps demur.

Emphasis is well explained in Chapters V. VI. and VII.

The remaining eight Chapters put the student in easy possession of all the necessary information on *Reading, Management of the Voice, and Action*. And we unhesitatingly give it as our opinion, that Mr. W. has attained the objects which in his advertisement, he professes to have had in view in preparing this little volume. His design was to take Mr. Walker's *Elements* for the basis of his work, but to curtail its redundancies, to compress its style, to develop more fully its principles, and to supply from other sources its omissions. No young person could perform the easy task of mastering this small book, without finding himself improved in the art of reading and speaking; and thereby possessed of additional means for augmenting his own and others' enjoyment.

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THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, MAY 1, 1833.

DURING the last winter, a course of Seventeen Lectures on Doctrinal Subjects, has been delivered at the Octagon Chapel, Norwich, by the Rev. W. J. Bakewell, to very numerous and highly attentive congregations. To express in a slight degree their sense of the benefit conferred on Unitarianism, by the able manner in which the various subjects had been treated; their appreciation of the talent, research, and zeal, evinced by their pastor, and their affectionate gratitude for the benefit and pleasure they had themselves derived from his voluntary exertions, some of the congregation presented Mr. Bakewell with a purse, containing above £27, which was presented to him by a deputation.

At the Annual Meeting, the treasurer, Rev. T. Drummond, after presenting a satisfactory report of the state of the Society, read the following letter from Rev. W. J. Bakewell, addressed to the Members of the Octagon Congregation:—

“My Christian Friends, I return you my sincere thanks for the additional mark which I have lately received of your candour, kindness, and generosity, conveyed to me in a manner most gratifying to my feelings, for the assurances which accompanied your handsome present, of your approbation of my lectures, and your affectionate interest in my welfare, are a source of the purest and liveliest satisfaction to my mind. The conviction imparted by numerous testimonies, of your approbation of my services, has operated as a powerful stimulus during my extra exertions, and will animate me to secure that good opinion which it is my happiness at present to possess.

“So long as the principles of Unitarian Christianity are widely misunderstood, and grossly misrepresented, it is the manifest duty of every Unitarian minister, to endeavour to disabuse the public mind, and to contend fearlessly for what he believes to be the truth as it is in Jesus. And though he may not, by two or three courses of Lectures, gain a numerous list of converts, he will by persevering exertions, diffuse far and wide a spirit of inquiry, he will make perceptible inroads on the dark kingdom of prejudice and intolerance, and prepare the way for the triumph of Christian truth and liberty.

“I remain, my Christian Friends, with every sentiment of respectful gratitude, your much obliged pastor,

“March 8, 1833.

W. J. BAKEWELL.”

Moor-Lane Anniversary, Bolton.—On Sunday and Monday, the 7th and 8th of April, was held the Eleventh Anniversary of the opening of the Unitarian Meeting-house, Moor-Lane, Bolton. The services on Sunday were conducted by the Rev. William Smith, minister of the congregation, who preached in the morning from the words, “A three-fold cord is not quickly broken,” dwelling upon the necessity and advantages of union and co-operation

among the members of a Christian Society. The sermon in the afternoon, was on the utility of Sunday-schools; it was attentively listened to by a numerous audience. The collection on the occasion, in aid of the Sunday-schools attached to the Meeting-house, amounted to upwards of £20.

The members and friends of the congregation met to dine together on the Monday, in the large room of the Town-hall; the number present was 106, male and female. Mr. Smith presided. Among the many friends who addressed the meeting, were the Revds. Smith, Beard, Baker, May, Hort, Wicksteed, and Messrs. Brandreth, F. Duffield, C. J. Darbishire, F. Darbishire, Peter Heywood, Taylor, Hulme, Barrow, and Boardman. The meeting was characterised by the same spirit of Christian zeal and harmony, for which, we are happy to say, all the preceding Anniversaries have been distinguished. There was the same zeal and spirit on the part of the speakers, the same candour and earnest attention on the part of the hearers. On this occasion, however, there were some respects in which the meeting possessed a peculiar interest. During the proceedings, Mr. Smith's acceptance of the warm and unanimous invitation of the congregation, to become their minister, was announced, and the enthusiastic manner in which it was received, sufficiently testified the attachment of his friends at Moor-Lane, to their deservedly respected minister.

It was particularly pleasing, also, to observe the kind spirit with which the chairman proposed "Prosperity to the Bank-Street Congregation," and the frank and truly Christian temper in which that wish was responded to by the Rev. F. Baker, and Mr. C. J. Darbishire—a manifestation of friendly feeling which may justly be regarded as a bright omen of the success likely to result from the united exertions of these zealous and popular ministers in the cause of truth and virtue.

In connection, also, with this Anniversary, another very interesting meeting was held on the Tuesday, when the children of the Sunday-school attached to the Moor-Lane Meeting-house, were regaled with an economical dinner. And after having been shortly and kindly addressed by the Revds. Smith, May, and Wicksteed, were dismissed to spend the remainder of the evening in company with their disinterested and benevolent teachers, in innocent recreation. C. W.

THE hundredth Anniversary of the birth of Dr. Priestley was celebrated in London, on 25th March. Dr. Babington, one of the most distinguished of the medical profession, was in the chair. The company consisted of two hundred individuals, representatives of the science and talent of Great Britain. On "the University of Oxford" being proposed, Professor Daubeny bore testimony to the importance of the discoveries of Dr. Priestley, in connection with the elucidation of modern systems of philosophy, more especially that which showed that the carbonic acid gas, so prevalent in animals, was also the food of plants. "The University of Cambridge" being given, Professor Cumming apologised for his inability to award that praise due to the inestimable merits of Dr. Priestley, on account of indisposition. He would say, that when he saw before him the man who had extracted lightning from the dor-

mant magnet, he had hopes that the discoveries of Dr. Priestley were not thrown away, but would be followed up by worthy successors, so as to produce great and beneficial results. Some persons, much to their own disgrace, had called Dr. Priestley a mere experimenter. Far different, however, was his character. His theories were based upon a strict investigation of facts; but his penetration was most conspicuous; and, what others would have passed by unnoted, led, by being submitted to the process of his investigation, to the most important results. His quickness of perception was wonderful, and perhaps it was owing to this very quickness of perception, that he was incapable of systematising the results. Indeed, it might be said, that it required different orders of minds to make discoveries, and to systematise them. He regretted those disgraceful proceedings by which Dr. Priestley had been driven away from this country, and congratulated the company, that they had lived to an age when such occurrences would be hardly credited. He beheld before him men of different religious and political opinions, but all were united in the endeavour to do honour to a man who was unhonoured in his age and his country. On the part of the University of Cambridge, which he so unworthily represented, he returned them most sincere thanks.

ON the 29th March, a similar commemoration took place at Birmingham. The dinner was held at the Royal Hotel in that town,—Rev. John Corrie, President of the Birmingham Philosophical Society, was chairman. Nearly two hundred individuals were present. After various toasts had been given, Mr. Corrie said, it now became his duty to propose the memory of the great man, the centenary of whose birth they were assembled to celebrate. An attempt systematically to eulogise Dr. Priestley were vain. In what capacity or how should it be done? To give a narrative of his life, would be the most appropriate eulogy. But, to speak of him only in his philosophical character, it would be impossible, on the present occasion, to give even an outline of his claims on their admiration. It would be recollected, that to detail the course of his discoveries, had occupied six lectures delivered in this town last year, by Mr. Phillips. Dr. Priestley had opened a new field in science. He stood forward as the founder of *Pneumatic Chemistry*. He drew to himself the admiration of all Europe; at a time, too, when such men as Black, Cavendish, Lavoisier, and Scheele, were ardently pursuing chemical science. One part of the philosophical character of Dr. Priestley was, the *moral feeling* which attended it; the purity and simplicity of his objects. He was actuated by no selfish motive in all he had done; he never turned his inventions to pecuniary profit. The discovery of the mode of impregnating water with gases, was his own; and, as soon as made, he communicated it freely to the Admiralty, under the impression, that the fluid so medicated, would be efficacious as a cure for the sea scurvy, but he never expected nor ever received for his communication any reward whatever. He did not seem even to be actuated by that “last infirmity of noble minds”—the love of *fame* simply—for, as soon as he had made a discovery, he gave it to the world, without waiting to introduce it in its perfection with pomp and circumstance. If he thought there was a chance of its being useful to mankind, he wished that it should be immediately made so. His own idea of the philosophic character, might be gathered from the admirable preface to his “History of Electricity;” and it might with truth be showed, that the picture he there drew was verified in himself. It had been imagined by some, that the character of the *philosopher* was incompatible with that of the *divine*. Dr. Watson, when made Bishop of Landaff, had burned his chemical papers, under this idea. But Dr. Priestley had combined the two characters during his whole life. Philosophy and

theology had perfectly harmonised in him. In truth, there was no better foundation of religious knowledge than philosophy. Nothing tended so much to a perfect knowledge of the *word* of God, as a knowledge of his *works*. It had been by men absurdly said, that "ignorance was the mother of devotion." To this it had been well replied, that, if so, she was such a mother as Medea, who strangled her children. If we took up the Sacred Volume, each one read the same words, but how different was their effect upon the uninformed, and upon the instructed eye and ear. The common reader, perusing the words, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," received from the word *heavens* no idea beyond that of the visible concave above him, spangled with stars, or illuminated by the sun and the moon. The mind of the philosophic reader conceived the idea of an infinite universe, in which the system of our sun, and moon, and world, formed a part so inconsiderable, that if the whole were at once annihilated, the loss would be no more perceived than would be the abstraction of a single mote from the myriads that floated and glittered in the sun's beams. He would offer another illustration. The discoveries of Dr. Priestley showed, that by the breathing of all animals, and by the combustion of matter, that quality of the air which supported life and flame was destroyed. How, then, was it, that after so many ages, the vital principle was not entirely extinct? Further researches showed, that what animal life was consuming, vegetable life was reproducing; that every leaf on which the sun shone, exhaled the salubrious component. Thus chemical philosophy showed how the balance in creation was kept up; thus it diffused a light on the wisdom and power of the Creator. The philosophical works of Dr. Priestley comprised but a few volumes, but how they teemed with experiments! A single volume, a single section, would seem to give employment to an ordinary life! and thus it was, that to the active mind of Dr. Priestley, a glimpse of the truth almost always led to magnificent results. He illustrated in himself, a beautiful simile which appeared in one of his works. "The progress of knowledge," said he, "is like the increase of a circle of light, which, as it enlarges, increases the number of points on which it touches, and influences the surrounding circle of darkness." And here it might be observed, that though not remarkable for the quality of mind called *imagination*, Dr. Priestley, in the course of his writings, gave frequent proofs of original and lively fancy, and even of poetical taste. The same might be remarked of other philosophers of high eminence. Such evidences of the existence of fancy, were frequently discoverable in the works of Locke and Bacon. Dr. Priestley was not only a *natural* but also a *moral* philosopher; but this part of his character would be noticed by other gentlemen present. In fact, his varied works and varied life, presented numerous points of instruction and contemplation to the inquirer. He lived here in comparative obscurity. It was not power, place, or rank, which conferred distinction on him. He ended his days in exile; but his whole life presented a monument of imperishable fame; and to him might be well and aptly applied two eloquent lines of Milton, referring to Shakspeare:—

"He now sepulchred in such pomp doth lie,
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die."

Yes! the name of Priestley was, indeed, embalmed in the recollection of multitudes who honoured him for his great talents so usefully exerted. Happily it was now safe to eulogise such a man; no fear of pains and penalties was now before the eyes of his friends, yet such times had been. If, however, their present assembling was uninfluenced by fear, it was equally free from all interested considerations. They were called together, not with any idea of gain or selfish views. They congregated there, in order to do justice to their feelings, on an occasion when a generous principle was affected. He might, perhaps, have occasion, in the

course of the evening, to renew his observations on the character of the eminent person they were commemorating; at present he would request them to drink, in solemn and reverential silence, and standing up,

“The memory of Dr. Priestley—the illustrious man, the centenary of whose birth we are this day to celebrate.”

Mr. Joseph Parkes acknowledged the honour justly and gratefully paid to the memory and character of Dr. Priestley. He said, that used as he might be to public speaking, he never experienced greater difficulty in satisfying his own feelings, or more inability to do justice to the subject of the meeting. He greatly regretted that the duty of acknowledging the generous and gratifying honour then paid to the moral and intellectual merits of Dr. Priestley, had not been discharged by Mr. Joseph Priestley—a son worthy of such a parent, and whose filial respect and intimate knowledge of his father, so much better qualified him to expatiate on Dr. Priestley’s private virtues, extraordinary talents, and singular acquirements, than he (Mr. Parkes) could pretend to do. He was extremely sorry that Mr. Priestley was prevented by circumstances, and especially his deafness, from enjoying the pleasure of attending the meeting, and of returning thanks in person to so numerous and respectable an assemblage, on an occasion so interesting and honourable to the memory of his father. Mr. Parkes then read a letter from Mr. Priestley, expressing his deep sense of the honour paid to his father’s memory in London and Birmingham, and his congratulation that Dr. Priestley’s public services in the cause of science and political and religious truth, were now duly and publicly appreciated by his country, and especially, that all classes of Christians now allowed Dr. Priestley “the merit of being an enlightened advocate of revealed religion.” After reading the letter, which was warmly applauded, Mr. Parkes said, that he would content himself with a few brief remarks on the character of Dr. Priestley, which, in every relation of private and public life, was now justly estimated, and stood out before his country clear from the prejudices of the age in which he lived. The purity of Dr. Priestley’s personal character, and his private virtues, were never even questioned by a virulent press or the tongue of slander. Dr. Priestley was indebted to his own single exertions, unaided by factitious circumstances of birth or fortune, for his distinguished literary eminence and scientific reputation. To use the language of the Roman, Dr. Priestley was “born of himself,” and could boast no aristocratic lineage—he was essentially a self-educated man, who had derived no advantages from academical education. His own zealous love of truth and science raised him to celebrity. Mr. Corrie and the recent meeting of the first men of science in London, had done ample justice to his promotion of science and philosophy. He (Mr. Parkes) did not wish to involve the unanimity of the meeting by any ill-timed or illiberal allusion to Dr. Priestley’s particular political or religious opinions; but it was due to that illustrious man to say, that truth was the great and single object of all his intellectual exertions—that the freedom of discussion and opinion which he claimed for himself, he desired to extend to all mankind—and that he boldly maintained civil and religious liberty, in the most unrestricted sense, to be the right of all men in all countries. The war of opinion which burst out on the first French revolution, involved the characters of many great public men in temporary prejudice and persecution, but the political opinions of Dr. Priestley were now the practical views of the present generation, and to Dr. Priestley was especially due the merit of exciting public attention to the injustice of the civil disabilities of the Protestant Dissenters, now so happily erased from the statute-book of England. Mr. Parkes then referred to the labours of Dr. Priestley in the cause of religion, which, he said, would be doubtless ably reviewed by other gentlemen—that it was impossible on such an occasion to give any analysis of his numerous

and valuable publications on such various subjects—that his works alone gave any adequate estimate of his extraordinary attainments and great public services in science, politics, and religion. He hoped that the younger members of the meeting present, would therefore form their opinions of this eminent man from his works; and if the spirit of Dr. Priestley could be supposed to be present at that moment, it would be cheered by the fact of their meeting in that room, in Birmingham, proving the enlightened sentiments and liberality of the present times, compared with the past. Mr. Parkes repeated his regret in being unable to do that justice to the subject he could have desired, and the grateful sense entertained by the surviving relatives and friends of Dr. Priestley, of the honour conferred by the meeting on the character of Priestley.

The Chairman next gave, after a few appropriate remarks, “the Rev. John Kentish, who now adorns the pulpit of Dr. Priestley, and who, since the year 1803 has been his most able, useful, and respected successor.”

The Rev. John Kentish, in acknowledging the honour done him, said, that on Christmas day, 1784, being then on a visit to Birmingham, he first saw his illustrious predecessor, and heard him deliver an admirable address from the pulpit to his congregation. How little did he (Mr. K.) then anticipate the events which followed. They were met to commemorate the centenary of the birth of one of the greatest benefactors of his race. Dr. Priestley was one of whom it might be truly said, he was a man for every country, and for all succeeding times. To speak of him was to speak of the unconquerable mind, and of freedom's holy form. There was something peculiarly interesting in the present celebration in this town. He would be long remembered here as the benefactor of the society to which he belonged, and remembered too, not merely in the character of a practical natural philosopher, but as a faithful and zealous teacher of what he deemed to be religious truth, and as the undaunted champion of freedom. He was a sound, active, vigorous, practical philosopher, and the manufactures and arts of this town had been considerably enlarged and improved by his valuable discoveries. As a religious teacher, too, he gave considerable impulse to the public mind. All his faculties were brought to bear on theology. He was the better theologian for being a sound philosopher, for he (Mr. K.) perfectly agreed with their worthy Chairman, that philosophy ought ever to be the handmaid of religion. Philosophy would never be hallowed without religion, nor religion enlightened without philosophy. It was this part of Dr. Priestley's character which earned for him the persecution which he sustained. Had he been a deist, or an atheist—had he avowed his dissent from the truths of revealed religion, he would not have been persecuted. It was because he boldly asserted and practised that which was the great boast of Protestantism—the right of private judgment—that he was driven from his country. Justice, however, was now being done to his motives; and the sincerity, as well as the ardour with which he advocated his religious principles, was admitted. It was now allowed by all, that Dr. Priestley knew no force but that of argument, although he had to deal with many of whom it might be said, they knew no argument but that of force. When he contemplated his removal from his then ungrateful country, he was addressed by one of the most intellectual minds, and the most poetic genius of those times, in the following strain:

“To thee the slander of a passing age
Imports not. Scenes like these
Hold little space in his large mind
Whose ample stretch of thought
Grasps future ages. Well canst thou afford
To give large credit for that debt of fame
Thy country owes thee. Calm thou canst consign it
To the slow payment of that distant day
(If distant) when thy name to freedom join'd
Shall meet the thanks of a regenerate land.”

That day appeared to him (Mr. K.) to have arrived, if not in full meridian, still it dawned upon them, and the mists of calumny had disappeared before the brightness of the morning. He congratulated them on being assembled in that particular spot, where, forty-one years ago, such a different scene was enacted. The philosophic character of Dr. Priestley had been ably sketched by their worthy Chairman, as had also his political and social virtues by Mr. Parkes; and it might perhaps be expected that he should follow up the order, by alluding to his character as a theologian and a minister of religion. Generally, then, he might be allowed to say, that the Doctor's works on theology were distinguished for perspicacity of style, and originality of thought. He considered his *Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever*, as most excellent, and entitling their author to great honour. In his controversial works he always displayed much versatility of talent, and not unfrequently a happy vein of humour, which tended to relieve the dryness of controversy. As a didactic writer he very much excelled, so that, upon the whole, there was probably none in his time who excelled him in this particular. As a minister, he (Mr. K.) could not but particularly advert to the uncommon pains which he took in the instruction of the young, a matter which ought always to be strictly regarded by every pastor of a congregation. After a few other remarks, the reverend gentleman concluded by proposing the following toast, which was received with great applause; "The Rev. John Corrie, the distinguished chairman of this meeting, and the enlightened promoter of knowledge and science in Birmingham."

The Chairman could assure them, he felt highly gratified at being selected to preside on this most interesting occasion. With regard to the latter part of the toast, he would only say, that if he had been made instrumental in diffusing through the town of Birmingham a few atoms of philosophic knowledge, he should regard it with great delight. If they would allow him, he would briefly allude to the great dinner which had been held in London on Monday last, for the same purpose they were then met, and at which he was present. Dr. Babington, the friend of the celebrated Sir Humphrey Davy, occupied the chair on the occasion. On his right sat Mr. Lubbock, the Vice-president of the Royal Society, who observed, that the principal discoveries of Dr. Priestley were first communicated to the public through the medium of the *Philosophical Transactions*. There were also present the two Secretaries of the Royal Society, and the professors of Chemistry in the two Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, who came to town expressly on the occasion, and who spoke very highly of the attainments and character of Dr. Priestley. He also noticed many other scientific men, among whom was Mr. Farady, the distinguished professor of Natural Philosophy in the Royal Society. Besides these, there were present many celebrated men, of all opinions in politics and religion, who were anxious to bear their testimony to the high reputation of Dr. Priestley as a philosopher. Such a meeting as this, in the capital of that empire from which Dr. Priestley was banished, was indeed a cheering sign of the times. He would now conclude by giving them another toast. He was sure they all deeply lamented the absence of the respected son of Dr. Priestley, particularly as that absence was occasioned by infirmity. He must say that his presence on that occasion would have considerably enhanced the interest of the meeting. They must all, however, have felt gratified at hearing the interesting letter which he had communicated to his able representative and son-in-law, Mr. Parkes. He now begged to propose—

"Joseph Priestley, Esq. Happiness and prosperity to his family, and to all the descendants of Dr. Priestley in England and North America."

The Rev. Mr. Bowen of Cradeley, son-in-law of Mr. Priestley, acknowledged this toast, and in the course of a few observations which he addressed to the company, said, he had learned enough of the illustrious

man, the centenary of whose birth they were that day met to celebrate, to revere his memory. From the debasement of character of many who, from their talents, might have been a blessing to the human race, it was delightful to turn to a man like Dr. Priestley, who exhibited a proof of what human nature might be advanced to, and who afforded a bright example for the emulation of all. All must admire the singleness of purpose with which he pursued moral and religious truth, and the boldness with which he advocated it. Few persons in his age, of liberal views and sentiments, dared openly to avow their opinions. Dr. Priestley, however, steadily and undauntedly advocated the truth, up to the period when he was compelled by bigotry and persecution, to leave the land of his birth. It was deeply to be deplored, that men should suffer on account of opinions, especially in cases like that of Dr. Priestley, where there was such an abundance of evidence to prove that those opinions were sincere and disinterested; and yet how many instances were there of the neglect or contempt of men who held opinions of the greatest value, but which were disregarded merely because they were in opposition to those of the generality of mankind? He rejoiced, however, that the more general diffusion of education in these times, was insuring free discussion, and trusted that the united efforts of the enlightened advocates of popular instruction of the present day, would extinguish bigotry and remove the evil of persecution. In conclusion, he begged to acknowledge the kind expressions in which the Chairman had regretted the absence of Mr. Priestley, for whom and whose family he now thanked them most sincerely for the honour conferred on the memory of Dr. Priestley, and thus reflected on his family.

The Chairman, after eulogising a work of Dr. Priestley on the *First Principles of Government*, which he recommended to general attention, proposed, connected with the health of the Rev. John Grundy of Liverpool—

“The Cause of Truth, and of Civil and Religious Liberty, all over the world.”

Rev. J. Grundy rose to reply. He had frequently thought, when hearing that toast given, that it would be better to reverse the terms, and say, the cause of religious and civil liberty. Religious liberty was the natural, inherent, inalienable right of man. It was a matter between man and his Maker, and no individual, without assuming the character of God, could stand between them. He could conceive of no real civil liberty, except there was perfect religious liberty. He must believe according to his conviction, and who should repress the expression of his opinions? He must teach his children what he believed to be true, and who should dare to interfere with him? Dr. Priestley had always most ardently promoted these doctrines; the times in which he lived were inauspicious; still, however, the seed which he had scattered was now springing up, and had he lived till now, with what a glow of gratitude and affection would his heart have been filled, to have beheld this great and glorious change in public opinion. How delighted would he have been at the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, the emancipation of the Catholics, and other great measures of a similar nature. He was gone, however, to his reward, and they had succeeded to his labours. They had a great and noble task to perform, and though there could be little hope of equalling him, yet would it be a glory and a privilege to tread in his steps.

(To be concluded in our next.)

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The Evidences of Christianity. By William Ellery Channing, D. D.

(Continued from page 299)

I now proceed to another and very important ground of my belief in the divine origin of Christianity. Its truth was attested by miracles. Its first teachers proved themselves the ministers of God by supernatural works. They did what man cannot do, what bore the impress of a Divine power, and what thus sealed the divinity of their mission. A religion so attested must be true. This topic is a great one, and I ask your patient attention to it.

I am aware that a strong prejudice exists in some minds against the kind of evidence which I have now adduced. Miracles seem to them to carry a confutation in themselves. The presumption against them seems next to infinite. In this respect, the present times differ from the past. There have been ages when men believed any thing and every thing, and the more monstrous the story the more eagerly was it received by the credulous multitude. In the progress of knowledge, men have come to see that most of the prodigies and supernatural events in which their forefathers believed, were fictions of fancy, or fear, or imposture. The light of knowledge has put to flight the ghosts and witches which struck terror into earlier times. We now know, that not a few of the appearances in the heavens, which appalled nations, and were interpreted as precursors of divine vengeance, were natural effects. We have learned, too, that a highly excited imagination can work some of the cures once ascribed to magic; and the lesson taught us by these natural solutions of apparent miracles, is, that accounts of supernatural events are to be sifted with great jealousy, and received with peculiar care.

But the result of this new light thrown on nature and history, is, that some are disposed to discredit all miracles indiscriminately. So many having proved groundless, a sweeping sentence of condemnation is passed on all. The human mind, by a natural reaction, has passed from extreme credulousness to the excess of incredulity. Some persons are even hardy enough to deride the very idea of a

miracle. They pronounce the order of nature something fixed and immutable, and all suspensions of it incredible. This prejudice, for such it is, seems to deserve particular attention; for until it is removed, the evidences of Christian miracles will have little weight. Let us examine it patiently and impartially.

The sceptic tells me, that the order of nature is fixed. I ask him, By whom, or by what is it fixed? By an iron fate? By an inflexible necessity? Does not nature bear the signature of an intelligent cause? Does not the very idea of its order, imply an ordaining or disposing Mind? Does not the universe, the more it is explored, bear increasing testimony to a Being superior to itself? Then the order of nature is fixed by a Will which can reverse it. Then a Power, equal to miracles, exists. Then miracles are not incredible.

It may be replied, that God indeed *can* work miracles, but that he *will* not. He will not? And how does the sceptic know this? Has God so told him? This language does not become a being of our limited faculties; and the presumptuousness which thus makes laws for the Creator, and restricts his agency to particular modes, is as little the spirit of true philosophy as of religion.

The sceptic sees nothing in miracles, but ground of offence. To me they seem to involve in their very nature, a truth so great, so vital, that I am not only reconciled to them, but am disposed to receive joyfully any sufficient proofs of their having been performed. To the sceptic, no principle is so important as the uniformity of nature, the constancy of its laws. To me there is a vastly higher truth, to which miracles bear witness, and to which I welcome their aid. What I wish chiefly to know, is, that Mind is the supreme power in the universe; that matter is its instrument and slave; that there is a Will to which nature can offer no obstruction; that God is unshackled by the laws of the universe, and controls them at his pleasure. This absolute sovereignty of the Divine mind over the universe, is the only foundation of hope for the triumph of the human mind over matter, over physical influences, over imperfection and death. Now it is plain, that the strong impressions which we receive through the senses from the material creation, joined to our experience of its regularity, and to our instinctive trust in its future uniformity, do obscure this supremacy

of God, do tempt us to ascribe a kind of omnipotence to nature's laws, and to limit our hopes to the good which is promised by these. There is a strong tendency in men to attach the idea of necessity to an unchanging regularity of operation, and to imagine bounds to a Being who keeps one undeviating path, or who repeats himself perpetually. Hence, I say, that I rejoice in miracles. They show and assert the supremacy of Mind in the universe. They manifest a spiritual power, which is in no degree enthralled by the laws of matter. I rejoice in these witnesses to so great a truth. I rejoice in whatever proves that this order of nature, which so often weighs on me as a chain, and which contains no promise of my perfection, is not supreme and immutable, and that the Creator is not restricted to the narrow modes of operation with which I am most familiar.

Perhaps the form in which the objection to miracles is most frequently expressed, is the following:—"It is derogatory," says the sceptic, "to the perfect wisdom of God, to suppose him to break in upon the order of his own works. It is only the unskilful artist who is obliged to thrust his hand into the machine, for the purpose of supplying its defects, and of giving it a new impulse by an immediate agency." To this objection, I reply, that it proceeds on false ideas of God and of the creation. God is not an artist, but a Moral Parent and Governor; nor is the creation a machine. If it were, it might be urged with greater speciousness, that miracles cannot be needed or required. One of the most striking views of the creation, is the contrast or opposition of the elements of which it consists. It includes not only matter, but mind, not only lifeless and unconscious masses, but rational beings, free agents; and these are its noblest parts and ultimate objects. The material universe was framed, not for itself, but for these. Its order was not appointed for its own sake, but to instruct and improve a higher rank of beings, the intelligent offspring of God; and whenever a departure from this order, that is, whenever miraculous agency can contribute to the growth and perfection of his intelligent creatures, it is demanded by his wisdom, goodness, and all his attributes. If the Supreme Being proposed only such ends as mechanism can produce, then he might have framed a machinery so perfect and sure as to need no suspension of its ordinary movements. But he has an

incomparably nobler end. His great purpose is to educate, to rescue from evil, to carry forward for ever, the free rational mind or soul; and who that understands what a free mind is, and what a variety of teaching and discipline it requires, will presume to affirm, that no lights or aids, but such as come to it through an invariable order of nature, are necessary to unfold it?

Much of the difficulty in regard to miracles, as I apprehend, would be removed, if we were to consider more particularly that the chief distinction of intelligent beings, is moral freedom, the power of determining themselves to evil, as well as good, and consequently the power of involving themselves in great misery. When God made man, he framed not a machine, but a free being, who was to rise or fall according to his use or abuse of his powers. This capacity, at once the most glorious and the most fearful which we can conceive, shows us how the human race may have come into a condition to which the illumination of nature was inadequate. In truth, the more we consider the freedom of intelligent beings, the more we shall question the possibility of establishing an unchangeable order, which will meet fully all their wants; for such beings, having of necessity a wide range of action, may bring themselves into a vast variety of conditions, and, of course, may come to need a relief not contained in the resources of nature. The history of the human race illustrates these truths. At the introduction of Christianity, the human family were plunged into gross and debasing error, and the light of nature had not served for ages to guide them back to truth. Philosophy had done its best and failed. A new element, a new power, seems to have been wanting to the progress of the race. That in such an exigence, miraculous aid should be imparted, accords with our best views of God. I repeat it, were men mechanical beings, an undeviating order of nature might meet all their wants. They are free beings, who bear a moral relation to God, and as such may need, and are worthy of a more various and special care, than is extended over the irrational creation.

When I examine nature, I see reasons for believing that it was not intended by God to be the only method of instructing and improving mankind. I see reasons, as I think, why its order or regular course should be occasionally suspended, and why revelation should be joined to it

in the work of carrying forward the race. I can only offer a few considerations on this point, but they seem to me worthy of serious attention. The first is, that a fixed invariable order of nature does not give us some views of God, which are of great interest and importance, or at least it does not give them with that distinctness which we all desire. It reveals him as the Universal Sovereign, who provides for the whole, or for the general weal, but not with sufficient clearness as a tender Father interested in the individual. I see in this fixed order his care of the race, but not his constant boundless concern for myself. Nature speaks of a general Divinity, not of the friend and benefactor of each living soul. This is a necessary defect attending an inflexible, unvarying administration by general laws; and it seems to require that God, to carry forward the race, should reveal himself by some other manner than by general laws. No conviction is more important to human improvement, than that of God's paternal interest in every human being; and how can he communicate this persuasion so effectually, as by suspending nature's order, to teach, through an inspired messenger, his paternal love?

My second remark is, that whilst nature teaches many important lessons, it is not a direct, urgent teacher. Its truths are not prominent, and consequently men may neglect it and place themselves beyond its influence. For example, nature holds out the doctrine of One God, but does not compel attention to it. God's name is not written in the sky in letters of light, which all nations must read, nor sounded abroad in a voice, deep and awful as thunders, so that all must hear. Nature is a gentle, I had almost said, a reserved teacher, demanding patient thought in the learner, and may therefore be unheeded. Men may easily shut their ears, and harden their hearts against its testimony to God. Accordingly, we learn that at Christ's coming, almost all nations had lost the knowledge of the true glory of the Creator, and given themselves up to gross superstitions. To such a condition of the world, nature's indirect and unimposing mode of instruction is not fitted, and thus it furnishes a reason for a more immediate and impressive teaching. In such a season of moral darkness, was it not worthy of God to kindle another and more quickening beam? When the long repeated and almost monotonous language of creation was not heard, was it

unworthy of God to speak with a new and more startling voice? What fitter method was there for rousing those whom nature's quiet regularity could not teach, than to interrupt its usual course?

I proceed to another reason for expecting revelation to be added to the light of nature. Nature, I have said, is not a direct or urgent teacher, and men may place themselves beyond its voice. I say, thirdly, there is one great point, on which we are deeply concerned to know the truth, and which is yet taught so indistinctly by nature, that men, however disposed to learn, cannot by that light alone obtain full conviction. What, let me ask, is the question in which each man has the deepest interest? It is this, are we to live again; or is this life all? Does the principle of thought perish with the body; or does it survive? And if it survive, where—how—in what condition—under what law? There is an inward voice which speaks of judgment to come. Will judgment indeed come? and if so, what award may we hope or fear? The future state of man—this is the great question forced on us by our changing life, and by approaching death. I will not say, that on this topic nature throws no light. I think it does; and this light continually grows brighter to them whose eyes revelation has couched and made strong to see. But nature alone does not meet our wants. I might prove this by referring you to the ages preceding Christ, when the anxious spirit of man constantly sought to penetrate the gloom beyond the grave, when imagination and philosophy alike plunged into the future, but found no resting-place. But every man must feel, that left to nature as his only guide, he must wander in doubt as to the life to come. Where, but from God himself, can I learn my destination? I ask at the mouth of the tomb for intelligence of the departed, and the tomb gives me no reply. I examine the various regions of nature, but I can discover no process for restoring the mouldering body, and no sign or track of the spirit's ascent to another sphere. I see the need of a power above nature, to restore or perpetuate life after death; and if God intended to give assurance of this life, I see not how he can do it but by supernatural teaching, by a miraculous revelation. Miracles are the appropriate, and would seem to be the only mode of placing beyond doubt man's future and immortal being; and no miracles can be so peculiarly adapted to this end, as the very ones which

hold the highest place in Christianity,—I mean the resurrection of Lazarus, and still more the resurrection of Jesus. No man will deny, that of all truths, a future state is most strengthening to virtue and consoling to humanity. Is it, then, unworthy of God to employ miracles for the awakening or the confirmation of this hope? May they not even be expected, if nature, as we have seen, sheds but a faint light on this most interesting of all verities?

I add one more consideration in support of the position, that nature was not intended to be God's only method of teaching mankind. In surveying the human mind, we discover a principle which singularly fits it to be wrought upon and benefitted by miraculous agency, and which might, therefore, lead us to expect such interposition. I refer to that principle of our nature, by which we become, in a measure, insensible or indifferent to what is familiar; but are roused to attention and deep interest by what is singular, strange, supernatural. This principle of wonder is an important part of our constitution; and that God should employ it in the work of our education, is what reason might anticipate. I see, then, a foundation for miracles in the human mind; and when I consider that the mind is God's noblest work, I ought to look to this as the interpreter of his designs. We are plainly so constituted, that the order of nature, the more it is fixed, excites us the less. Our interest is blunted by its ceaseless uniformity. On the contrary, departures from this order, powerfully stir the soul, break up its old and slumbering habits of thought, turn it with a new solicitude to the Almighty Interposer, and prepare it to receive with awe the communications of his will. Was it unworthy of God, who gave us this sensibility to the wonderful, to appeal to it for the recovery of his creatures to himself?

I here close my remarks on the great objection of scepticism, that miracles are inconsistent with the Divine perfections; that the Supreme Being having established an order of operation, cannot be expected to depart from it. To me such reasoning, if reasoning it may be called, is of no weight. When I consider God's paternal and moral relation to mankind, and his interest in their progress; when I consider how accordant it is with his character, that he should make himself known to them by methods most fitted to awaken the mind and heart to his goodness;

when I consider the need we have of illumination in regard to the future life, more distinct and full than the creation affords; when I consider the constitution and condition of man, his free agency, and the corruption into which he had fallen; when I consider how little benefit a being so depraved was likely to derive from an order of nature to which he had grown familiar, and how plainly the mind is fitted to be quickened by miraculous interposition;—I say, when I take all these things into view, I see, as I think, a foundation in nature for supernatural light and aid; and I discern, in a miraculous revelation, such as Christianity, a provision suited at once to the frame and wants of the human soul, and to the perfections of its Author.

There are other objections to miracles, though less avowed than that which I have now considered; yet, perhaps not less influential, and probably operating on many minds so secretly as to be unperceived. At two of these I will just glance. Not a few, I am confident, have doubts of the Christian miracles, because they see none *now*. Were their scepticism to clothe itself in language, it would say, "Show us miracles and we will believe them. We suspect them because they are confined to the past." Now this objection is a childish one. It may be resolved into the principle, that nothing in the past is worthy of belief, which is not repeated in the present. Admit this, and where will incredulity stop? How many forms and institutions of society recorded in ancient history, have passed away? Has history, then, no title to respect? If, indeed, the human race were standing still; if one age were merely a copy of preceding ones; if each had precisely the same wants; then the miracles required at one period, would be reproduced in all. But who does not know, that there is a progress in human affairs? that formerly mankind were in a different state from that through which they are now passing? that, of course, the education of the race must be varied? and that miracles, important once, may be superfluous now? Shall we bind the Creator to invariable modes of teaching and training a race whose capacities and wants are undergoing a perpetual change? Because, in periods of thick darkness, God introduced a new religion by supernatural works—shall we expect these works to be repeated, when the darkness is scattered and their end attained? Who does

not see, that miracles from their very nature, must be rare, occasional, limited? Would not their power be impaired by frequency? and would it not wholly cease were they so far multiplied as to seem a part of the order of nature?

The objection I am now considering, shows us the true character of scepticism. Scepticism is essentially a narrowness of mind, which makes the present moment the measure of the past and future. It is the creature of sense. In the midst of a boundless universe, it can conceive no mode of operation, but what falls under its immediate observation. The visible, the present, is every thing to the unbeliever. Let him but enlarge his views; let him look round on the immensity of the universe; let him consider the infinity of resources which are comprehended in omnipotence; let him represent to himself the manifold stages through which the human race is appointed to pass; let him remember that the education of the ever-growing mind must require a great variety of discipline; and especially, let him admit the sublime thought, of which the germ is found in nature, that man was created to be trained for, and to ascend to an incomparably higher order of existence than the present; and he will see the childishness of making his narrow experience the standard of all that is past and is to come in human history.

It is strange, indeed, that men of science should fall into this error. The improved science of the present day, teaches them that this globe of ours, which seems so unchangeable, is not now what it was a few thousand years ago. They find proofs by digging into the earth, that this globe was inhabited, before the existence of the human race, by classes of animals which have perished, and the ocean peopled by races now unknown; and that the human race are occupying a ruined and restored world. Men of science should learn to free themselves from the vulgar narrowness which sees nothing in the past but the present, and should learn the stupendous and infinite variety of the dispensations of God.

There is another objection to miracles, and the last to be now considered, which is drawn from the well-known fact, that pretended miracles crowd the pages of ancient history. No falsehoods, we are told, have been more common, than accounts of prodigies; and, therefore, the miraculous character of Christianity, is a presumption

against its truth. I acknowledge that this argument has its weight; and I am ready to say, that did I know nothing of Christianity, but that it was a religion full of miracles; did I know nothing of its doctrines, its purpose, its influences and whole history, I should suspect it as much as the unbeliever. There is a strong presumption against miracles considered nakedly, or separated from their design, and from all circumstances which explain and support them. There is a like presumption against events not miraculous, but of an extraordinary character. But this is only a reason for severe scrutiny and slow belief, not for resisting strong and multiplied proofs. I blame no man for doubting a report of miracles when first brought to his ears. Thousands of absurd prodigies have been created by ignorance and fanaticism, and thousands more been forged by imposture. I invite you, then, to try scrupulously the miracles of Christianity; and if they bear the mark of the superstitious legends of false religions, do not spare them. I only ask for them a fair hearing and calm investigation.

It is plainly no sufficient argument for rejecting all miracles, that men have believed in many which are false. If you go back to the times when miraculous stories were swallowed most greedily, and read the books then written on history, geography, and natural science, you will find all of them crowded with error; but do they therefore contain nothing worthy your trust? Is there not a vein of truth running through the prevalent falsehood? And cannot a sagacious mind very often detach the real from the fictitious, explain the origin of many mistakes; distinguish the judicious and honest from the credulous or interested narrator, and by a comparison of testimonies, detect the latent truth? Where will you stop if you start with believing nothing on points where former ages have gone astray? You must pronounce all religion, and all morality to be delusion, for on both topics men have grossly erred. Nothing is more unworthy of a philosopher, than to found a universal censure, on a limited number of unfavourable facts. This is much like the reasoning of the misanthrope, who, because he sees much vice, infers that there is no virtue, and because he has sometimes been deceived, pronounces all men hypocrites.

I maintain that the multiplicity of false miracles, far from disproving, gives support to those on which Chris-

Christianity rests; for, first, there is generally some foundation for falsehood, especially when it obtains general belief. The love of truth is an essential principle of human nature; men generally embrace error on account of some precious ingredient of truth mixed with it, and for the time inseparable from it. The universal belief of past ages in miraculous interpositions, is to me a presumption that miracles have entered into human history. Will the unbeliever say that it only shows the insatiable thirst of the human mind for the supernatural. I reply that in this reasoning, he furnishes a weapon against himself; for a strong principle in the human mind, impelling men to seek for, and to cling to miraculous agency, affords a presumption that the Author of our being, by whom this thirst for the supernatural was given, intended to furnish objects for it, and to assign it a place in the education of the race.

But I observe, in the next place, and it is an observation of great importance, that the exploded miracles of ancient times, if carefully examined, not only furnish a general presumption in favour of the existence of genuine ones, but yield strong proof of the truth of those in particular upon which Christianity rests. I say to the sceptic, you affirm nothing but truth in declaring history to abound in false miracles; I agree with you in exploding by far the greater part of the supernatural accounts, of which ancient religions boast. But how do we know these to be false? We do not so judge without proofs. We discern in them the marks of delusion. Now I ask you to examine these marks, and then to answer me honestly, whether you find them in the miracles of Christianity. Is there not a broad line between Christ's works, and those which we both agree in rejecting? I maintain that there is, and that nothing but ignorance can confound the Christian miracles with the prodigies of heathenism. The contrast between them is so strong, as to forbid us to refer them to a common origin. The miracles of superstition carry the brand of falsehood in their own nature, and are disproved by the circumstances under which they were imposed on the multitude. The objects for which they are said to have been wrought, are such as do not require or justify a divine interposition. Many of them are absurd, childish, or extravagant, and betray a weak intellect or diseased imagination. Many can be explained by natural causes. Many are attested by persons who lived in different coun-

tries and ages, and enjoyed no opportunities of inquiring into their truth. We can see the origin of many in the self-interest of those who forged them, and can account for their reception, by the condition of the world. In other words, these spurious miracles were the natural growth of the ignorance, passions, prejudice, and corruptions of the times, and tended to confirm them. Now it is not enough to say, that these various marks of falsehood cannot be found in the Christian miracles. We find in them characters directly the reverse. They were wrought for an end worthy of God; they were wrought in an age of improvement; they are marked by a majesty, beneficence, unostentatious simplicity and wisdom, which separate them immeasurably from the dreams of a disordered fancy, or the contrivances of imposture. They can be explained by no interests, passions, or prejudices of men. They are parts of a religion which was singularly at variance with established ideas and expectations, which breathes purity and benevolence, which transcended the improvements of the age, and which thus carries with it the presumption of a divine original. Whence this immense distance between the two classes of miracles? Will you trace both to one source, and that a polluted one? Will you ascribe to one spirit, works as different as light and darkness, as earth and heaven? I am not, then, shaken in my faith by the false miracles of other religions. I have no desire to keep them out of sight; I summon them as my witnesses. They show me how naturally imposture and superstition leave the stamp of themselves on their fictions. They show how man, when he aspires to counterfeit God's agency, betrays more signally his impotence and folly. When I place side by side the mighty works of Jesus and the prodigies of heathenism, I see that they can no more be compared with one another, than the machinery and mock thunders of the theatre, can be likened to the awful and beneficent powers of the Universe.

In the preceding remarks on miracles, I have aimed chiefly to meet those general objections, by which many are prejudiced against supernatural interpositions universally, and are disinclined to weigh any proof in their support. Hoping that this weak scepticism has been shown to want foundation in nature and reason, I proceed now to state more particularly the principal grounds, on which I believe that the miracles ascribed to Jesus and the first

propagators of Christianity, were actually wrought in attestation of its truth.

The evidences of facts are of two kinds, presumptive and direct, and both meet in support of Christian miracles. First, there are strong presumptions in its favour. To this class of proofs, belong the views already given of the accordance of revelation and miracles, with the wants and principles of human nature, with the perfections of God, with his relations to his human family, and with his ordinary providence. These I need not repeat. I will only observe, that a strong presumption in support of the miracles, arises from the importance of the religion to which they belong. If I were told of supernatural works, performed to prove that three are more than one, or that human life requires food for its support, I should know that they were false. The presumption against them would be invincible. The author of nature could never supersede its wise and stupendous order, to teach what falls within the knowledge of every child. Extraordinary interpositions of God, suppose that truths of extraordinary dignity and beneficence are to be imparted. Now in Christianity I find truths of transcendent importance, which throw into shade all the discoveries of science, and which give a new character, aim, and interest to our existence. Here is a fit occasion for supernatural interposition. A presumption exists in favour of miracles, by which a religion so worthy of God is sustained.

But a presumption in favour of facts is not enough. It indeed adds much force to the direct proofs; still these are needed, nor are they wanting to Christianity. The direct proofs of facts are chiefly of two kinds; they consist of testimony, oral or written, and of effects, traces, monuments, which the facts have left behind them. The Christian miracles are supported by both. We have first the most unexceptionable testimony, nothing less than that of contemporaries and eye-witnesses, of the companions of Jesus, and the first propagators of his religion. We have the testimony of men who could not have been deceived as to the facts which they report; who bore their witness amidst perils and persecutions; who bore it on the very spot where their Master lived and died; who had nothing to gain and every thing to lose if their testimony were false; whose writings breathe the sincerest love of virtue and mankind, and who at last sealed their

attestations with their blood. More unexceptionable witnesses to facts cannot be produced or conceived.

Do you say, "these witnesses lived ages ago; could we hear these accounts from their own lips, we should be satisfied"? I answer, you have something better than their own lips, or than their own word taken alone. You have, as has been proved, their writings. Perhaps you hear, with some surprise, that a book may be a better witness than its author; but nothing is more true, and I will illustrate it by an imaginary case in our own times.

Suppose, then, that a man claiming to be an eye-witness, should relate to me the events of the three memorable days of July, in which the last revolution of France was achieved; suppose, next, that a book, a history of that revolution, published and received as true in France, should be sent to me from that country. Which is the best evidence of the facts? I say, the last. A single witness may deceive; but that a writer should publish in France the history of a revolution which never occurred there, or which differed essentially from the true one, is, in the highest degree, improbable; and that such a history should obtain currency—that it should not be instantly branded as a lie, is utterly impossible. A history received by a people as true, not only gives us the testimony of the writer, but the testimony of the nation among whom it obtains credit. It is a concentration of thousands of voices, of many thousand witnesses. I say, then, that the writings of the first teachers of Christianity, received as they were by the multitude of Christians in their own times and in those which immediately followed, are the testimonies of that multitude, as well as of the writers. Thousands nearest to the events, join in bearing testimony to the Christian miracles.

But there is another class of evidence, sometimes more powerful than direct witnesses, and this belongs to Christianity. Facts are often placed beyond doubt by the effects which they leave behind them. This is the case with the miracles of Christ. Let me explain this branch of evidence. I am told when absent and distant from your city, that on a certain day, a tide such as had never been known, rose in your harbour, overflowed your wharves and rushed into your streets. I doubt the fact; but hastening here, I see what were once streets, strewn with sea-weed and shells, and the ruins of houses, and I cease to doubt. A witness may

deceive, but such effects cannot lie. All great events leave effects, and these speak directly of the cause. What, I ask, are the proofs of the American Revolution? Have we none but written or oral testimony? Our free constitution, the whole form of our society, the language and spirit of our laws, all these bear witness to our English origin, and to our successful conflict for independence. Now, the miracles of Christianity have left effects which equally attest their reality, and cannot be explained without them. I go back to the age of Jesus Christ, and I am immediately struck with the commencement and rapid progress of the most remarkable revolution in the annals of the world. I see a new religion, of a character altogether its own, which bore no likeness to any past or existing faith, spreading in a few years through all civilized nations, and introducing a new era, a new state of society, a change of the human mind, which has broadly distinguished all following ages. Here is a plain fact which the sceptic will not deny, however he may explain it. I see this religion issuing from an obscure, despised, hated people. Its Founder had died on the cross—a mode of punishment as disgraceful as the pillory or gallows at the present day. Its teachers were poor men, without rank, office, or education, taken from the fishing-boat and other occupations which had never furnished teachers to mankind. I see these men beginning their work on the spot where their Master's blood had been shed, as of a common malefactor; and I hear them summoning, first his murderers, and then all nations and all ranks, the sovereign on the throne, the priest in the temple, the great and the learned, as well as the poor and the ignorant, to renounce the faith and the worship which had been hallowed by the veneration of all ages, and to take the yoke of their crucified Lord. I see passion and prejudice, the sword of the magistrate, the curse of the priest, the scorn of the philosopher, and the fury of the populace, joined to crush the common enemy; and yet without a human weapon, and in opposition to all human power, I see the humble Apostles of Jesus winning their way, overpowering prejudice, breaking the ranks of their opposers, changing enemies into friends, breathing into multitudes a calm spirit of martyrdom, and carrying to the bounds of civilization, and even into half-civilized regions, a religion which has contributed to advance society more than all other causes

combined. Here is the effect. Here is a monument more durable than pillars or triumphal arches. Now I ask for an explanation of these effects? If Jesus Christ and his Apostles were indeed sent and empowered by God, and wrought miracles in attestation of their mission, then the establishment of Christianity is explained. Suppose them, on the other hand, to have been insane enthusiasts, or selfish impostors, left to meet the whole strength of human opposition, with nothing but their own power, or rather their own weakness, and you have no cause for the stupendous effect I have described. Such men could no more have changed the face of the world, than they could have turned back rivers to their sources, sunk mountains into valleys, or raised valleys to the skies. Christianity, then, has not only the evidence of unexceptionable witnesses, but that of effects; a proof which will grow stronger by comparing its progress with that of other religions, such as Mahometanism, which sprung from human passions, and were advanced by human power.

(To be continued in our next.)

On Professor Stuart's Letters to Rev. Dr. Channing.

(Continued from page 281.)

WITH regard to that question respecting what theologians call the Divine Nature of Christ, and whether it is a distinct person in the Trinity or otherwise, we may now address ourselves, with the endeavour to ascertain what the Scriptures really say on the point; and we shall be in a condition to do this so much the more successfully, that we have narrowed the field of discussion to a small number of texts. And here let me remark, that while I speak of the *Trinity* and the three *persons* in it, I do not forget that Mr. Stuart and others have expressed their dissatisfaction with these terms; but as they have not agreed upon other terms to be substituted in their stead, and as they still assert their belief in something substantially equivalent to such terms, I will speak of them (for want of other words) only as designating such a mysterious but real distinction in the Godhead as they contend for, without imputing to them the inconveniences of the said terms. Now, having defined, as I hope, the object of our inquiry, I observe, that the passages of Scripture *directly* bearing upon the doctrine of the Trinity, are confined to

the introduction of John's Gospel, and to those which seem to impute the natural creation *especially* to the word or Logos of God. The texts, indeed, which seem to speak of the personal *pre-existence* of Christ, may be thought to belong to the same class; but they can be explained upon the Arian theory, and also upon the supposition of there being something figurative in them. We confine ourselves, therefore, to those positive texts on which the theory of the Trinity (if true) ought to rest as its foundation.

* * * * *

I will grant at once, that John speaks of the Logos as if it were God, and yet distinguishable from God; and that it was by the union of this Logos to the man Jesus, that he was made the Christ, and the only begotten Son of God. I will grant, that the Apostle likewise asserts, that the natural world was created by the Logos. Well, all this is admitted favourable to the doctrine of the Trinity, and in fact was the very foundation of it. The other passages of Scripture, which speak of the creation of the world by the divine nature of Christ, are less clear, whether it may be the *natural* or the *moral* world that is meant; but we will not dispute about that, for if the doctrine of the Trinity can be fairly established by John's introduction, and along with it, the creation of the material world by the second person of the Trinity, who was afterwards made flesh in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, we will grant that these passages may be viewed as having a respect to the same thing, and thereby fortifying the doctrine. But we must advert here, to a certain rule of interpretation frequently referred to by Mr. Stuart, *viz.* that *one* passage of Scripture, clearly importing any given doctrine, is sufficient to prove it. Now, I hold this to be only true, where there are no other passages of Scripture with which that one is apparently inconsistent or contradictory. But when that is the case, we ought surely to give some preference to that doctrine which appears supported by several passages, over that which is only supported by one, because the chance of some error in the transcribing of ancient manuscripts, is greater in one solitary instance than in several separate instances. We must either do this, or we must endeavour to find out some way of reconciling the apparent differences. Now, I will show, *first*, that there are a great many passages of Scripture inconsistent with the interpretation which Trini-

tarians put upon the introduction of John's Gospel; and *second*, I will show that there is a way of explaining John's remarks about the Logos, in a different manner from what the Trinitarians do, and so as to reconcile them with other passages of Scripture, with which his assertions seem at first view to be inconsistent; and if I make out these two points, the doctrine of the Trinity is deprived of all its foundation.

* * * * *

If the Trinitarian doctrine were true, and especially if it was of so much practical importance to believe it as some people allege, certainly our Lord, when speaking of his divine power and authority, would have ascribed it to his union with the second person of the Trinity; but in the whole body of John's Gospel, in which this very subject is frequently expressed, and sometimes formally discussed with the Jews, Jesus uniformly ascribes his power, authority, and doctrine, to the Father. And John the Baptist, again, who was expressly commissioned to speak on the subject, ascribes the divine character of Jesus to the circumstance of his having received the Holy Spirit "*without measure*." These testimonies are very plain, and so numerous that I need not cite them particularly. The whole Gospel of John may be read in proof. All these passages of Scripture are evidently opposed to the idea of the Logos being a *second* person in the Trinity, distinct from the Father and the Holy Ghost. On the contrary, the divine powers, or authority of Christ, or his divine nature, as it is theologically called, is rather ascribed to his union with the first or third person of the Trinity, than with the second, and more frequently with the first person, than with the others. What, then, are we to conclude? I should suppose, apparently, that these are just different modes of speaking of the same thing, namely, that there was indeed a most intimate union, or communication between God and Jesus of Nazareth, by means of which he was sanctified and qualified for his office, as the Saviour and Judge of the world; a connexion, the mode and nature of which, may be variously expressed, and which we perhaps cannot comprehend, but which does not justify the doctrine of any distinction of persons in the Godhead, and the residence or union of the second in particular, in the man Jesus.

* * * * *

There was a certain divine influence, spirit, or nature (call it what you will), in constant union or communication with Jesus, such as no other man ever enjoyed. It was on this account that he was called *the* Messiah or Christ, which means a person "anointed" with *peculiar gifts*. There was no plurality of Christs. He was the only one of his kind, at least in this world; and that is all we are concerned with. This divine principle, or nature, is not properly *the Christ* itself, for its properties were intrinsic; but in a loose and figurative sense, it is sometimes, though rarely, called so. For instance, when it is said that Christ dwelleth in his disciples, it is manifest that this does not mean the person of the man Jesus, it can only mean a *portion of* that spirit which dwelt in him "without measure." In this way, it is distinguished from the actual person of Jesus Christ.

The same divine principle or nature may be spoken of likewise, as pre-existent to the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, and John furnishes us with an instance of this sort, and with a term to designate it by. It was the WORD. This Logos, or Word, we may define, as the vivifying energy or presence of the Deity, *manifested* by some extraordinary act or effect, different from the common laws of nature. For instance, in the natural world it is manifested by creation or miracle; in the moral world, by the constitution of such a character as Jesus Christ, and partially, in the regeneration of Christians.

(To be continued in our next.)

SONNET.

OH! I have view'd the starry vault sublime,
 When Cynthia "walk'd in glory," with her train
 Of countless worlds;—from o'er the eastern plain
 I've seen day's king burst from his sleep, and climb
 Majestically grand his heavenly throne;—
 The fresh green earth I've gazed on, and the sea—
 The deep blue sea, with beauties all its own;
 And I've beheld the lake's tranquillity—
 The lily's spotless loveliness—the charm
 Of childhood's innocence, of manhood's worth,
 Of woman's faultless purity and warm
 And truthful love,—and I have own'd that earth,
 So oft a hell, might aye be made a heaven,
 If man were ne'er to mar the good which God hath given!

R. H.

On the Importance of adhering to Acknowledged Principles in the Interpretation of the Scriptures.—No. 5.

(Concluded from page 304.)

As certain passages of Scripture are usually alleged in support both of the soul's native immortality, and of the destination of many immortal souls to endless misery, it may be expected that I should here enter into a particular examination of those passages; but having, I trust, shown that the account of man's creation, of his physical and moral state, and his offence and punishment, are all wholly inconsistent with these tenets, I propose, next, to take a general glance at the Christian dispensation, in order more fully to show, how exactly it meets and is directed to the absolute removal of the sentence of "condemnation," which, understood as being that of mortality, has undeniably been extended to our whole race. It is evidently the representation of the Scriptures, that, on occasion of the offence of one man, a condemnation to the evils of mortality was passed, which evils have been extended to the whole human species; and it is equally the representation of the Scriptures of the New Testament, that, on occasion of the irreproachable and distinguished righteousness of one man, an assurance was imparted to the world in general, that there will be a universal resurrection of the dead. Now, since mortality is the condemnation that is universally extended, it clearly follows, that a deliverance from that mortality, is a deliverance from the state of condemnation; or, it is the result of what the Apostle terms, "an acquittal," or "justification of life." It is as certain as the truth and authenticity of the Scriptures containing the respective narrations, that Adam's transgression proved the occasion of a sentence of mortality, which has been universally extended, and that the exemplary obedience of Christ proved the occasion of his resurrection, and of the proclamation of a universal resurrection. Mortality, then, is represented as a state of condemnation to which all mankind are subjected; and, agreeably to the statement of the Apostle, a deliverance from mortality to an immortal life, is a complete deliverance from the effects of the sentence,—from the very evil which is the consequence or attendant upon sin; or rather, it is the full attainment of the very blessing to which it is opposed.*

* See Rom. v. 12-21, and connect verse 12 with the concluding clause of verse 18, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death

Being imparted, in the first instance, to the most morally excellent of mankind, it was as truly the divine reward of his exemplary obedience, as the opposite was the disciplinary punishment appointed to Adam, in the first instance, for his disobedience. God "suffered not his holy one to see corruption;" he was "the first fruits" from the dead, and in that state he is constituted the Messiah, or is elevated to the head of all human authority. These are the rewards by which he is distinguished above all other human beings, evidently upon the ground of his pre-eminence above all others in piety and moral worth. Upon the same principle, his genuine disciples, or "they which are his," who have drank of his spirit, and have most resembled him in their lives and conversation, will be raised next "in order"—will precede all those who have not attained to the like excellence of character, in the time of their deliverance from the condemnation of death; and, will moreover, be distinguished by an immediate and complete deliverance from that state: they will be liable to no second mortality,—“over them the second death hath no power.” Upon them no further “judgment” will be exercised, but they will “pass” immediately “from death unto life”—a life which will be pure and perpetual, from which both sin and death will be for ever excluded. Again, The rest of the dead will not live till a thousand *prophetic* years—the precise duration of which, can, perhaps, only be determined by the event—have expired. Then, indeed, the whole remaining human race, still, however, denominated “the dead,” will stand before God, and “the books” recording their conduct in this life, “will be opened;” “another book,” also, “will be opened, which is the book of life.” (Rev. xx. 12–15.) This, I doubt not, indicates, that as they will all now experience

by sin, and so death passed upon all men; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.” The intervening passage is a parenthesis. The phrases *made sinners*, and *made righteous*, verse 19, means that *the many*, or the *all men*, mentioned verse 18, are successively treated as sinners, and as righteous persons, by being subjected to the penalty upon the one, and destined to receive the blessing upon the other, which are respectively death and the resurrection. And so as “sin hath reigned unto death” universally, “even so might grace reign unto eternal life by Jesus Christ” alike universally. Our Lord himself is said to be “*made sin, who knew no sin*,” i. e. he suffered death, that “*we might be made the righteousness of God in him*,” in other words, that “he might abolish death, and bring an immortal life” to the knowledge and hopes of all mankind.

a temporary deliverance from the grave, which deliverance will extend to mankind of every description, not previously restored to life, however seemingly they may have been long sunk in "the sea" of oblivion, so they will finally obtain a complete deliverance from it. So universal and decisive will be this summons, that the very state and condition of "death"—hades, will be *destined* to destruction. "Whosoever," however, among these, "is not found," by a due estimation of "his works," to be "written in the book of life," will undergo "the second death." All this concurs to show, that as death is the penalty annexed to sin, and from which it is inseparable, so a life from whence mortality and all its attendant evils is wholly excluded, constitutes the highest blessing of God upon obedience. The physical evils to which mankind are at present subjected, are to be regarded as the attendants, the correctives, or the *preventives* of corresponding moral evils or imperfections. In their connection with a future life, however, they are instrumental in forwarding the purification and improvement of mind and character; and when this is *realised*, many may, in a great measure, be delivered from the *moral*, and consequently from the *physical* adversary. But in all persons, they will be so proportioned, that a future life will be but a partial deliverance from the condemnation of death, in those cases in which it is attended with only a partial deliverance from moral evil. Persevering offenders will undergo the evils of a second mortality, which, being represented by "a lake of fire," will probably be attended with severer chastenings than any which are incident to the present life, but which will be *decisive* in the destruction of death itself, and consequently of the moral evil which is its inseparable attendant. The virtuous, on the other hand, in the order of their virtue, some speedily, and others less advanced in the moral scale, at a more remote period, will be summoned from death unto life—a life in which there shall be "no more death, neither sorrow nor weeping, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things will have passed away."

HOMO.

REVIEW.

The Literary History of Galloway. By Thomas Murray.

(Concluded from page 315.)

It would be easy to furnish many entertaining extracts from the lives of those we have named, and particularly from that of

Viscount Stair, and from the very interesting biography of Murray, the professor of oriental languages at Edinburgh, whose career was so abruptly terminated at a period when he had excited the highest expectations of all literary men. But this would require more space than can fairly be allotted to this article, and we will therefore conclude with a brief notice of a character which was the theme of much conversation in the West of Scotland upwards of forty years ago, that of Dr. M'Gill of Ayr, author of "*a Practical Essay on the Death of Jesus Christ.*" We have been long acquainted with this celebrated work, and have every reason to think, both from the strain of the narrative and from all that we have ever heard of the subject of it, that Dr. Murray's sketch of the life of its author, is distinguished by his accustomed candour and accuracy. Dr. M'Gill was appointed to the second charge at Ayr, in 1761. His work was published in 1786. Dr. Chalmers has termed this period of the ecclesiastical history of Scotland, "an age of cold and feeble rationality, when evangelism was derided as fanatical, and its very phraseology was deemed an ignoble and vulgar thing." Dr. Murray after quoting these expressions, continues in the following terms: "To that party in the church to whom these words more especially refer, and who at that period were altogether predominant, Dr. M'Gill belonged; and though a man not only of irreproachable but exemplary moral character, and most indefatigable and popular as a clergyman, he seems to have receded as far as possible from the sentiments of the party to whom he was opposed, while he carried to an extreme extent his own peculiar views. But the circumstances of the church in this respect, are quite changed. Both sides seem to combine or to rival each other in promoting *sound religious views,*" &c.

And why is it, we ask, that the predominance of the rationalists in the church has been lost? Plainly because the views which our author terms *sound*, have been boldly and fully proclaimed under protection of creeds, and confessions, and church courts; and because the heralds of more reasonable doctrines, instead of asserting their Christian liberty, have been content with the *indirect* exposition of their principles, have shrunk from the task of refuting error, and of directly and unequivocally contrasting human formularies of belief, with the simplicity of the Christian doctrine. We have little doubt that this has often been the course pursued within the walls of the kirk, by men of great integrity, who thought that they thus most effectually served the cause of truth. Such men have greatly underrated the pernicious effects of theoretical error, and have deceived themselves by plausible sophisms, into a persuasion that the human compositions to which their assent has been required, admit of interpretations consistent with their principles. Some of their number, and perhaps Dr. M'Gill among the rest, were permitted to subscribe the Westminster Confession, with some species of limitation as to its consistency with the Scriptures; but even in this form it hung like a millstone about their necks, and their doctrines, instead of being warmly and zealously propounded, degenerated into a really "cold and feeble rationality."

Dr. M'Gill remained unmolested for three years, principally, as Mr. Murray thinks, on account of "the great respectability of the reverend author, and the high estimation in which as a clergyman he was held." A prosecution or *persecution* (if the reader prefers the expression) was then commenced, not in consequence of any dissatisfaction among his own people, for they uniformly and zealously supported him, and the proceedings against him did not begin in the presbytery of Ayr, but in the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, and were stirred up by some *clergymen* of opposite sentiments. Dr. M'Gill defended his opinions, "though he at the same time declared that his views were not hostile to the authority, or incompatible with the doctrines of the church;" and his opponents maintained that his works contained errors and heretical sentiments: 1. On the doctrine of the atonement; 2. On the person and character of Christ; 3. On the priesthood and intercession of Christ; 4. On the method of reconciliation to God in the way of repentance; and 5. On subscription to the Confession of Faith.

In April 1790, Dr. M'Gill presented to the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, an explanatory statement on the five points above enumerated. This statement, which is considered by Mr. Murray to be an "ample and manly apology," was at once received "without a dissentient voice"—"a result," adds our author, "honourable to all the parties concerned, and favourable to the cause of religion in general, and particularly in that quarter of the country, which had been so severely agitated." From this opinion we dissent. There is a stillness which is pernicious, and an agitation of opinion which is conducive to purity of faith. Dr. M'Gill, whose explanations are too long for insertion, had made large advances in the path of Scriptural truth; he seems, indeed, to have maintained some modification of the irrational and unscriptural doctrine of atonement and sacrifice, but in other respects, his work is that of a Unitarian; and we think he would have acted a more manly and honourable part, and would certainly have been a more useful character in his day and generation, if he had refused all submission—whether the consequence of that refusal had been expulsion from the church or not. But in judging of his conduct, it is necessary to take into account; 1. That he was surrounded by a number of friends who were most solicitous to effect a reconciliation between him and his opponents, and most assiduous in representing to him that his apology contained no concessions of any importance; and, 2. That he was at the time subjected to the pressure of the most severe family affliction. One very promising daughter died of consumption, either on the day of the termination of the proceedings, or on the day after; another was confined in an asylum, in consequence of disorder of mind; and another showed symptoms of similar disorder. These circumstances, together with the loss of his whole property in the Douglas & Heron bank, will not indeed justify, but will certainly, in the eye of charity, extenuate greatly the course which he was persuaded to pursue.

But what shall we say of his opponents? If it be right for a

church to frame human standards of faith, and to enforce these as authoritative explanations of the Scriptures, they unquestionably did right. But we have no words sufficiently strong to express our condemnation of the above principle. Let no church which adopts it, be termed Protestant. To what end, *protest* against the pope's dictation, if we submit to the dictation of church creeds? To what end, claim the use of the Scriptures in our own language, if we are not to be guided by them to any other conclusions, but such as have been definitively settled by a council of Protestant popes, two centuries before we breathed the breath of life? Not only every individual minister in the church, but every assemblage of such individuals, is solemnly tied down, not to vary one jot or one tittle from the decisions of these immaculate spiritual dictators. The domination of the Kirk of Scotland over the minds of her sons, is not a whit less absolute in principle than that of popery itself. They may, indeed, quit her bosom, and manfully protest against her tyranny. But if it be a duty of Christianity to search the Scriptures, it is a duty with which no church, calling itself Christian, ought to *presume* to interfere; it is a duty which ought to be capable of being performed in the church, and to the performance of which, no penalty ought to be attached, otherwise that church cannot escape the censure of having done all in her power to repress *that* right of inquiry and freedom of opinion, which are an essential part of our holy religion. If it be said, that standards of opinion are necessary in an established church, this argument may tend to prove that an established church is a bad thing, but it will never prove the propriety of preventing the ministers of the Gospel from inquiring freely into its doctrines, and adopting implicitly the conclusions to which their inquiries lead them.

Dr. M'Gill held a high reputation as a literary man. Mr. Murray tells us, that he corresponded with some of the most distinguished men in this part of the island. The language of his "Essay" is clear and forcible, free from all turgidity and affectation, and remarkably pure and accurate. The matter is pious and practical, and if read without prejudice, will be found both interesting and highly instructive. The following remarks by Mr. Murray, on the personal character of the author, must be inserted in justice to his memory.

"His professional and moral character was pure. He was warmly attached to his relations, and cultivated regular intercourse with them. In his domestic capacity, whatever were the trials, which, in this respect, he underwent, he was exemplary. His friendships were steady; and by his friends, he was generally not only respected but beloved. We have seen, that he had opponents, but he was never known to have a personal enemy. His manners were mild, and his conversation lively, agreeable, and instructive. He was possessed of great equanimity, the result of natural strength of mind, as well as of an abiding principle of piety and of dependance on the wisdom of Divine Providence. When one of his children, who had come to an untimely

death, was lying a corpse, he did not hesitate to perform the public duties of the Sabbath, with his usual composure and firmness."

We have been informed, that he was remarkable for a very peculiar species of wit, and, occasionally, of sarcasm, and that many very happy sallies of this description are still retailed in Ayrshire. The following may serve as a characteristic specimen. A young man had preached a transcendently orthodox sermon, when on trial before the Presbytery of Ayr. The Doctor commented on it, and alleged that in some points it was not consistent with the Scriptures. To this another clergyman replied, and insisted that the sermon was quite *orthodox*: on which Dr. M'Gill is reported to have said, "Moderator, I did not say that it was not *orthodox*, I only said that it was not Scriptural."

Mr. Lockhart, in his *Life of Burns*, has studiously endeavoured to undervalue both his talents and his virtues. His fair and honourable biographer has done him justice in both these respects. The following correction is important. "In Lockhart's *Life of Burns*, is this sentence, 'Dr. M'Gill was fain to acknowledge his errors, and promise that he would take an early opportunity of apologising for them to his own congregation from the pulpit—which promise, however, he never performed.' No such promise was ever asked of him, or made, and therefore could not be performed. The assertion, in short, though made with such confidence, is unfounded in truth."

He died on the 30th March 1807, in the 76th year of his age. Dr. Dalrymple, his colleague, to whom his work is dedicated, "died in 1814, after having been sixty-eight years in the ministry. Between these two clergymen the greatest friendship and happiness obtained during the protracted period of their joint incumbency." They were regarded with the highest respect and veneration by their people, and entertained similar theological views; and these views were very prevalent among the clergy who were their contemporaries in that part of Scotland.

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1. *Alice and Ruth; or the Duty of Obedience.*
 2. *The Well-spent Hour.* Reprinted and revised from American editions. By the Rev. S. Wood, B. A. Second edition.

WE have submitted these little volumes to an infallible test, and proved them to be very good. We have put them into the hands of children with a permission, not a *command* to read the stories, and found that they very much interested, and not a little impressed the young readers. As they read, they criticised the conduct of Alice, and Ruth, and Kitty, and Julia, and praised one and blamed another; and talked in great earnestness, of emulating Ruth in obedience, and Kitty Nelson in doing the greatest possible good in an hour. They evidently both understood and felt the truth of what they read. Theirs was the criticism of nature. And this is the criticism that may be safely trusted. If books for children delight, instruct, and stimulate them to good actions, then, without all controversy, they must really be proper, useful, and good books for children.

We cannot even in the world of imagination, find two things more dissimilar and incongruous than a book of mystical theology, the chief or only object of which is to impress upon the juvenile mind, the technical phraseology of an unintelligible system; and a book of the plain, the pleasing, and the true, intended to expand, to strengthen, and to direct aright the mental powers of the young. And the amazing differences in the effects produced by these two classes of books, are strikingly manifest in the tone, the look, and even the attitude of the child who is reading. If one of the first kind be in hand, the tone is dull, the look is vacant, and the attitude is listless. But if a book of the other description be given to the same child, the voice indicates earnestness, the face evinces attention, and the body manifests that the mind is engaged. The former was not understood, and therefore was burdensome. The latter is easily comprehended, and therefore is read with avidity. In reading the former, the child feels it to be a heavy task, and is wishing heartily that it were done. In reading the latter, the child has his understanding exercised, his feelings excited, and his curiosity aroused; and the pleasures experienced, beget a reluctance to close the book when the lesson is finished, and an eagerness to resume the enjoyment.

Let any child that can read, be allowed to begin either Chap. II. or III. of "The Well-spent Hour," and we pledge our parental experience, that the little reader will be very anxious to proceed to the end, and to know all about "the wonderful book," and "the curious painters." And this is not all. When these two chapters have been read, by a child of ordinary capacity, that child will know more about the head and the eye, about vision and sensation, than multitudes of grown-up persons.

We do not see, why there should not be a "School Book Depository" established in London, by the Unitarians of Great Britain, and another in Boston by the Unitarians of America, between whom a regular exchange of books published by each institution, should be made; so that Unitarian Christians' children may have a good supply of books, in poetry and prose, which should contain nothing antisciptural, nothing unmeaning, nothing uninstrucive and unimproving. Such institutions would encourage those writers for our children, who have already embarked in that great and good work, and increase their number; they would also facilitate the supply of books, and they would, by the creation of a greater demand, likewise be enabled to reduce the prices. A comparatively small capital, embarked in such a "School Book Depository," would be productive of incalculable benefit.

Illustrations of Political Economy, Nos. 14 & 15. Berkeley the Banker. Parts 1st and 2d. By Harriet Martineau. Charles Fox, London.

THIS wonderful manufactory goes on without stint or limit, and almost with the certainty, precision, and speed of mechanical power. Month after month turns out, for the lasting delight and

benefit of the reading public, and with unfailing regularity, its full compliment of wisdom—garnished and set off with the charms of fiction and the grace of genius.

The nice and difficult question of the Currency, is the subject which Miss Martineau has selected for illustration in this admirable tale. And she has exhibited with her usual force of colouring and distinctness of conception, a masterly succession of pictures illustrative of the disastrous consequences, public and private, of those fluctuations in the value of money, which have arisen from the insecure and dangerous condition of our circulating medium, and from the action of unjust and inconsiderate legislation. Her mode of illustration is peculiarly her own. Thoroughly acquainted with human nature in all its phases, it is easy for her to tear off the veil which conceals its workings, in the more remote sections of society. Accordingly, we are transferred to a small country town, christened Haleham, and not very distant from London. This little bustling place, with its twenty population, out of which she selects her dramatic personæ, is described with a fulness of detail, and a minuteness and delicacy of finish, unrivalled except in the masterly pictures of similar scenes by the late Miss Austin. Mr. Berkeley is a retired merchant, enjoying a handsome fortune in an easy quiet sort of way at Haleham, and happy in a sensible wife, two sensible daughters, and a sensible young fellow of a son. In an evil hour, he is induced to become a banker in a neighbouring town:—the upshot of which is, his bankruptcy in three or four years, a calamity brought upon him by one of those ruinous fluctuations in the currency, which have so frequently since 1797, desolated society. Mr. Berkeley is an honest man, ruined by an evil system, over the workings of which he had no control;—but to show more fully up the insecure and dangerous character of our monetary system, there is also brought forward a precious knave, one Cavendish, who sets up for a banker in Haleham, and who fails, as might be expected, after swindling everybody that he can. These are the chief actors in the drama; but we have a sly selfish widow, a Mrs. Parndon, whose quiet angling after a worthy old prig of a bookseller, somewhat deaf, is very amusing, and a fine piece of Dutch painting. Love we have also,—for what female writer can take up her pen, and omit that theme of themes?—but it is a reasoning, considerate species of love Miss Martineau deals in—nothing violent or exalted,—we are never in pain for her heroes or heroines upon this score. They have such a fund of good sense in them, that we are under no alarm as to their fortunes, being very sure that no violent catastrophe will succeed. Accordingly, the loves of Henry Craig and Melea Berkeley are very placid, and stimulate the reader into a gentle interest as to their issue—which is as it should be. There is also a Hester Parndon, the daughter of the widow, a further interesting person, who marries an Edgar Morrison—who turns out a bad boy,—and the history of whose luckless marriage, forms the chief material of the second part of this tale. Mr. Edgar Morrison is one of those choice spirits, who are partial to spending money, but not very fond of the labour necessary honestly to make it. His salary at

a clerk in one of the public offices, being rather limited for his genius in this way, he connects himself with a gang of forgers, and obliges his wife to pass their notes. We can scarcely forgive Miss Martineau, for degrading such a noble creature as Hester Parndon into a vender of forged notes, even to please her husband. Conjugal love, no doubt, will suffer long and be kind—it will endure all things for the sake of the beloved object. But we do not think that a clear-sighted and high-toned mind like Hester's, could have been prevailed upon, by any species of influence, to deviate into such a moral obliquity. Nothing can be finer, however, or more profoundly touched, than her struggles of mind, during the continuance of this fatal traffic, and as the increasing conviction is borne in upon her, of the utter and selfish worthlessness of her husband. At last the gang is discovered and dispersed, and their leader Edgar hanged, according to the tender mercies of the Bank of England. Hester returns broken-hearted to her mother, who is soon after united, amid the undissembled glee of all Halem, to her steady old lover, Enoch Pye,—just the day before the placid loves of Melea Berkeley and Henry Craig are brought to a similar happy issue. Such is a brief outline of this admirable tale. As a specimen of its execution, we present our readers with the following extract, descriptive of the stoppage of Mr. Berkeley's bank:—

“The streets of D—— were full of bustle from an hour before the bank opened in the morning. News was brought by customers into Mrs. Millar's shop, of expresses which had been seen going and returning, it was supposed, from the other banks which must necessarily be expecting a run. Everybody had something to tell;—what a prodigious quantity of gold and silver there was in large wooden bowls on the bank-counter; how such and such a carrier had left the market early to elbow his way into the bank, and demand cash, being afraid to carry home notes to his employer; how there was no use in going to market without change, as a note might travel the whole round of butchers' stalls, without finding a hand to take it; how some of the folks would receive Bank of England notes, and others would be content with nothing short of gold. There were many laughs about the ignorance of certain of the country people respecting the causes and nature of the panic;—of the young woman who carried Bank of England notes to be changed for those of the D—— bank; of the old woman who was in a hurry to get rid of her guineas for notes, because she was told the guinea-bank was in danger; and of the market-gardener who gladly presented a note of a bank which had failed a year before, expecting to get cash for it. Later in the day, remarks were heard on the civility and cheerfulness of the young gentleman, the son of one of the partners, just arrived from London, it was said, and who seemed to understand the thing very well, and to be quite easy about every body having his own. With these were coupled criticisms on the young gentleman's father, who was fidgetting about, trying to joke with the country people, but as cross as could be between times: to which somebody answered, that he might well be cross when an old friend and busi-

ness connexion, from whom he might have expected some consideration and gratitude, had sent his porter with two £10 and one £5 note to be cashed. No wonder Mr. Berkeley said, loud enough for everybody to hear, that Mr. Briggs ought to be ashamed of himself: for it was true that he ought.—A new comer explained that Mr. Briggs had nothing to do with it; and that he had, on learning what a liberty his porter had taken with his name, sent a note to Mr. Berkeley, explaining that he had issued strict orders to all his people, early that morning, not to go near the bank the whole day; and that the porter was dismissed his service, and might obtain employment, if he could, from the persons who had no doubt sent him to get change for their notes, because they did not choose to appear in the matter themselves.

“The most urgent messages and incessant personal applications failed to procure such a supply of gold from the corresponding bank in London, as would satisfy the partners of the D—— bank of their ability to meet the run, if it should continue for some days. It did so continue; relaxing a little on the third day, becoming terrific on the fourth, and obliging the partners to hold a midnight consultation, whether they should venture to open their doors on the fifth. The bank did not this day remain open an hour after the usual time: it was cleared almost before the clock struck six; and though some of the people outside were considerate enough to remember that the clerks and partners must all be weary, after so many days of unusual toil, and that this was reason enough for the early closing of the shutters, there were others to shake their heads, and fear that the coffers were at length emptied of their gold.

“For the first two hours in the morning, the partners congratulated themselves on their resolution to take the chance of another day. The tide was turned: people were ashamed of their panic, and gold flowed in. A note, to say this, was sent to Mrs. Berkeley, who immediately began her preparations for returning home before night. The messenger, who went to and fro between D—— and Haleham, was charged with good news for Melea; and all seemed happy again, when the fearful tidings arrived that the corresponding banking-house in London was exposed to a tremendous run, and required all the assistance it could obtain, instead of being in any condition to send further funds to its country correspondent.

“All attempts to keep this intelligence secret were in vain. Within an hour, everybody in D—— had heard it, and it was impossible to obviate the effects of the renewed panic. The partners did not defer the evil moment till their coffers were completely emptied. As soon as the tide had once more turned, and gold began to flow out a second time, they closed their bank, and issued a notice of their having stopped payment.”

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, JUNE 1, 1838.

Birmingham Centenary Anniversary of Dr. Priestley.

(Concluded from page 324.)

THE Chairman said that it would be in the recollection of some of the oldest gentlemen present, that there was a time when it was almost dangerous to speak respectfully of Dr. Priestley. What would they say, then, if they were told that there was an individual the very reverse of that great man in doctrine, who was, moreover, a clergyman of the Established Church, and who yet dared to vindicate his character on all occasions, in public or private, when he heard it aspersed? He was sure they would say with one accord, "let us honour the memory of such a man." In the Rev. Dr. Parr they would recognise the character he had drawn. Fortune placed him in the neighbourhood of Birmingham, at a time when it was considered that Dr. Priestley was the most formidable opponent of the Established Church. Notwithstanding this, however, he formed an intimacy with him, which was never broken; and seized every occasion to defend the character of his friend, whenever and wherever he heard it attacked. As a proof of the high estimation in which Dr. Parr held Dr. Priestley, he (Mr. Corrie) referred to a work published by Dr. Parr in 1792, the year after the memorable riots of Birmingham. It was entitled, "A Letter from Irenopolis to the Inhabitants of Eleutheropolis," in which the venerable Parr says, "Let Dr. Priestley be confuted where he is mistaken; let him be exposed where he is superficial; let him be repressed where he is dogmatical; let him be rebuked where he is censorious. But let not his attainments be depreciated—because they are numerous, almost without a parallel. Let not his talents be ridiculed—because they are superlatively great. Let not his morals be vilified—because they are correct without austerity, and exemplary without ostentation—because they present, even to common observers, the innocence of a hermit, and the simplicity of a patriarch; and because a philosophic eye will at once discover in them the deep fixed root of virtuous principle, and the solid trunk of virtuous habit."

"The memory of Dr. Samuel Parr, eminently distinguished for his extensive and profound erudition, for his attachment to civil and religious freedom, and for his manly and eloquent vindication of Dr. Priestley's injured fame."

The Chairman expressed his regret for the absence of the Rev. W. Field of Warwick, the intimate and esteemed friend of Dr. Parr, who would have appropriately acknowledged the last toast had he been present. He then proceeded to give the memory of another great man, a contemporary of Dr. Priestley; and who, like Dr. Parr, had ventured to uphold Dr. Priestley's character; he alluded to the Rev. Robert Hall of Leicester. Mr. Hall, in a pamphlet published in 1791, entitled "Christianity connected with the Love of Freedom," thus eulogised Dr. Priestley:—"The religious tenets of Dr. Priestley, appear to me erroneous in the extreme; but I should be sorry to suffer any difference of sentiment to diminish my sensibility to virtue, or my admiration of genius. From him the poisoned arrow will fall pointless. His enlightened and active mind, his unwearied assiduity, the extent of his researches, the light he has poured into almost every department of science, will be the admiration of that period when the greater part of those who have favoured, or those who have opposed him, will be alike forgotten. Distinguished merit will ever rise superior to oppression, and will draw lustre from reproach. The vapours which gather round the rising sun, and follow it in its course, seldom fail at the close of it to form a mag-

nificent theatre for its reception, and to invest, with variegated tints and with a softened effulgence, the luminary which they cannot hide." Having read this beautiful and well merited eulogy, he would propose a toast, with which he begged to connect the name of a gentleman present, the Rev. Mr. Berry of Leicester:—

"The memory of the Rev. Robert Hall, the fearless advocate of the public and private character of Dr. Priestley, and the undaunted champion of the freedom of the press in adverse times."

The Rev. Mr. Berry had had much intercourse and conversation with Mr. Hall, whose varied talents he much admired. He had frequently heard him pay tributes of respect to the memory of Dr. Priestley. He remembered on one particular occasion, when he (Mr. Berry) requested that he might lend Mr. Hall Dr. Priestley's Notes on the Bible, and wished him to peruse them, he respectfully declined, saying "that at his time of life he did not wish to have any questions of difficulty thrown into his mind on those important subjects by the learning and ingenuity of a man like Dr. Priestley;" he nevertheless acknowledged his talent. Mr. Hall was an ardent defender of civil and religious liberty; he was one of those great men who at that time were full of the liveliest expectations of the good which would result from the French revolution. He had heard an anecdote which showed in a striking light Mr. Hall's ardour in the cause of freedom. Travelling with the venerable and learned Andrew Fuller, in a Coach from Bristol to London, the conversation turned on political topics. Mr. Hall was told that there was a probability of speedily obtaining a Reformed Parliament, on which he said—"Sir, I should think nothing of walking a thousand miles barefoot, to be beheaded at the end of my journey, if so desirable an end could be accomplished!" To which Mr. Fuller humorously replied,—“I think, brother Hall, you would walk mighty slow.” He (Mr. Berry) believed Mr. Hall was a man of great sincerity and unaffected piety. With regard to the great man whose memory they were that day met to honour, he scarcely knew that he could add any thing to what had been already said. He ranked him in talent and moral greatness among the Bacons and Lockes, after whom the generality of the world came lagging and limping a full century behind. Dr. Priestley appeared to him to have been peculiarly impressed with a sense of religion. His discourses "on habitual devotion," and "on not living to ourselves," were admirable, and proved the justice of the remark he had just made respecting him. How did he show his love to God?—by endeavouring to unfold the works of his wonderful creation, and by expounding the pages of revelation, so that the light of truth might shine throughout the world! How deeply was it to be lamented that such a man should, forty years ago, have been driven by the furious spirit of bigotry, from the town in which he lived, and ultimately from the land of his nativity, whilst rich and pampered pluralists were suffered to riot at their ease, some of whom, too, made Priestley a stepping-stone to place and emolument! He (Mr. Berry) sincerely congratulated them, however, on the altered spirit of modern times. It was, indeed, a matter of no slight importance, that the inhabitants of the very town which compelled Dr. Priestley to cross the wide Atlantic, to seek an asylum from their fury, should have contributed so powerfully, by their admirable union, and moral determination, to accomplish that very reformation in the government of the country, for which he so much panted. To complete the contrast, he could not refrain from observing, that the descendants of that very population which sought the life of Dr. Priestley, had, in great public meeting assembled, at a most eventful crisis of their country's fate, offered up their solemn thanksgiving to Almighty God for the favourable termination to their exertions, through the medium of a reverend gentleman who was of the same religious persuasion as Dr. Priestley.

Were it possible that the venerable and great Priestley could again revisit the principal scene of his labours, he would find the places of worship, which he left in ashes, rebuilt and filled with numerous and intelligent congregations; and principles, which were then almost universally decried, now cherished and progressive.

The Chairman next gave, after some prefatory remarks,—

“The Rev. Hugh Hutton—the pastor of the Old Meeting House congregation, and the uncompromising asserter of the right of private judgment.”

The Rev. Hugh Hutton rose and said:—To be noticed in such a way as this, and on such an occasion, was an honour which but a very few years ago he could not have anticipated. He had set out in life fully resolved to vindicate the right of private judgment; and before he had proceeded far, he came in contact with the writings of Dr. Priestley, and what before was dark, became light, and that which was difficult, became easy; he saw that he had only to follow him, and all would be clear. Luckily he had been thrown into adverse circumstances, which served to fire his zeal; and he had ever continued to advocate his principles, without having the fear or favour of man before him. He felt that he had imbibed at least a portion of the spirit which animated the Doctor, and for which he felt a gratitude beyond his power of utterance to express. He was astonished to find it asserted by an eminent American writer, whose works were justly esteemed, “that Dr. Priestley was defective in moral enthusiasm and deep feeling.” He appealed to those who knew him, to say, whether this was not most erroneous. Did he not spend his days and nights, and was he not willing to sacrifice his life in the pursuit of truth; and did this show a want of moral enthusiasm and deep feeling? He thought no man was entitled to say this of him, till like him he had gone through the fiery ordeal of persecution.

The Chairman next proposed—

“The honoured memory of the Rev. Wm. Hawkes, Dr. Priestley’s greatly esteemed predecessor; of the Rev. Samuel Blyth, his affectionate colleague; of the Rev. Dr. Toulmin; and of the Rev. Radcliffe Scholefield, the companion of his early studies, and of a very interesting term of his future years.”

Mr. William Hawkes said:—In rising to return you my thanks for drinking to the memory of the Rev. William Hawkes, I must first express the great pleasure which I have felt in listening to the remarks which have been made relative to the character of Dr. Priestley. Those which fell from our President, describing that character as a philosopher, were marked with that power of description, and extent of perception, which his own great and philosophic mind enabled him so well to appreciate and express. Mr. Joseph Parkes took a more political view of the character, and he is the better enabled to feel that portion of the character from his own political bearing, which is as bold as it is liberal and consistent. The reverend gentleman to the right of our President, who so many of us have the peculiar privilege to call pastor, spoke of his character in a ministerial capacity; but I feel a delicacy in saying with what pleasure I listened to him this day, lest it should be conceived that I am forgetting some of the happiest moments of the week, when, in his chapel, I may listen to that advice, council, and encouragement, delivered with a force of language, and tempered with a kindness of manner so peculiarly his own. It cannot be supposed that I shall enter into any history of a character which, being spent in the seclusion of private life, must want that show and circumstance which in public individuals is striking to all. But I do not venerate the memory of my grandfather the less, because I do not see his name connected with public matters or on public record. I am given to understand that, as a minister, his services were marked with an impressive earnestness which was as simple

in language as it was pure in conception, marked with high mental vigour and regulated by a sound understanding. As a counsellor and friend, his advice was equally sought and valued as much by the learned as others; and that I believe all who knew him will bear testimony. That whether in a most delicate conception of true rectitude of conduct, whether in a generosity of feeling that was as unbounded as it was judicious in expression, whether in a warmth of affection, the intensity of which was increased by the very reserve which cloaked it, or whether in the most elevated conceptions of the sacred importance of his holy calling, that in all those points he was pre-eminent.

Mr. George Blyth acknowledged that part of the toast which related to his grandfather, the bright spot in whose existence was that he was the colleague of the illustrious Priestley. The notice thus taken of his grandfather, would cheer and gladden the heart of his (Mr. Blyth's) venerable parent, now in his 78th year, who was so intimately identified with Protestant dissent in this town; and he felt himself doubly honoured in being thus connected with, and being allowed to acknowledge the honour they had done to the memory of his respected grandsire.

The Rev. Robert Kell acknowledged that part of the toast alluding to the Rev. Ratcliffe Scholefield; and mentioned the coincidence of his having been born in the same year, and educated in the same seminary as Dr. Priestley, and dying within a few months of him.

Mr. W. Hawkes Smith rose.—With respect to the particular purpose of the meeting, he would add his personal recollection of Dr. Priestley. When a child of five years old he had spent a day at Fairhill, and retained a vivid remembrance of the busied attention of the Doctor to the inquiries as to what he saw; and this might be considered as a type and illustration of our very interesting view of the character of Dr. Priestley, namely, his constant wish to inform the youth about him. As one of the hearers of Mr. Phillip's lectures, also, he would bear testimony to the striking picture drawn by that gentleman, of the activity of the mind, of the great discoveries, of his perfect frankness, his freedom from all selfish desire of fame or profit; and of his devotion to the cause of improvement and science. Of the Rev. W. Hawkes, as his elder grandson, and knowing him well, he would add, to what had been said, that his deportment was marked by gentlemanly dignity, and by the kindest consideration for the comfort of others. His pulpit services now were remembered but by few. Those few, however, spoke of his doctrinal effusions as animated and fervent, in a degree seldom surpassed; of his discourses, as sound and practical, delivered in clear and forcible language, and often eminent for their elucidation of difficult passages of Scripture. As an instance of the independence of his mind, it might be added, that he never chose to be ordained (an omission unusual in those days), and that, in consequence, he was not deemed eligible to administer the Lord's Supper, or to perform the office of baptism. Another name was also before them, that of Dr. Toulmin, to which (as his grandson by marriage) he would speak. The Doctor for fifty years had been an esteemed minister of the Gospel, and not unfrequently the correspondent of Dr. Priestley. In his literary character he was distinguished by invincible industry, unvaried candour, and a desire to be useful. As a controversialist, his style was marked by an amenity and suavity towards his opponents, which might shame the bitter sarcasms which often deformed the pages of authors in that line. His conversational powers were great, and his reading extensive, both in ancient and modern literature. In the social circle he exhibited an ingenious simplicity and a cheerful flow of spirits, which joined to a copious fund of narrative, rendered him the favourite companion of the youngest of his numerous descendants. For himself he (Mr. S.) would add, that he felt a pride in thus addressing the party, in reference to his connection

with two such names. He had always regarded the ministerial function as combining great usefulness and considerable moral influence, and he would observe, that those who had a right to perpetuate in their families the names of the Howards and the Russells, could not receive a superior degree of harmless gratification than was his, when he distinguished his children by the additions of Joshua Toulmin, William Hawkes, and Job Orton.

The following toast was next given from the chair.

"The Rev. Samuel Bache, the eloquent coadjutor of Mr. Kentish; and may his exertions in the pulpit of a Priestley, secure to him in an equal degree the affections of the members of the New Meeting House so eminently enjoyed by his great predecessor."

The Rev. S. Bache briefly but ably acknowledged the notice of himself. Dr. Priestley had obtained great renown as a philosopher and a man of science. It had been said he was not desirous of this renown; and certainly as far as regarded himself this was true—but no one could have read his works, even cursorily, without observing that Dr. Priestley was anxious by his philosophical researches to exalt and benefit Christianity. This indeed was the grand and leading object of his valuable life.

The Chairman then proposed—

"The Rev. James Martineau, who even at an early period of his public life avouched his attachment to the great principles of Protestant dissent, by his refusal of the *Regium Donum* in Ireland."

The Rev. J. Martineau had long looked to Birmingham as the very citadel and stronghold of dissent, and he had witnessed with no small satisfaction the determined attempts which had been made to get rid of the unjust method of supporting the teachers of one religious sect at the expense of those who conscientiously differed from them in opinion. It was both mischievous and dangerous to interfere with persons in matters of opinion, particularly on subjects of such high and paramount importance as that of religion. The right of thinking and judging for themselves on these subjects, without any inquiry or molestation, was a right which no man could abandon for himself without virtually consenting to its abrogation with regard to others; and therefore it was the sacred duty of every individual resolutely to contend for it. What was it which most contributed to violence? It was the continual oppression of power—the attempt to keep down the human intellect, and such attempts must necessarily be abortive. He knew that although at times the index on the dial might seem to be stationary, it was only during the temporary obscurity of the sun of truth, occasioned by some great battle with the foes of mankind. We had unfortunately seen the ministers of religion supported by a forced remuneration, instead of resting upon the voluntary subscriptions of their hearers; they had seen religion itself patronised by courts instead of being enthroned in the heart. It had, in short, most strangely and unhappily been made to interfere with the progress of knowledge, instead of being in its natural position in the van of human improvement, conquering and to conquer. He regarded meetings of this description as valuable means of marking the progress of opinion in society, and every opportunity of the kind should be sought to elevate the tone of public morals.

"The universal diffusion of education and science—always a leading object of Dr. Priestley's efforts." To which the Rev. J. J. Taylor of Manchester replied.

"May we agree to differ—Social union, and prosperity to the people and trade of Birmingham."

This was acknowledged in an appropriate and excellent speech, by Mr. Henry Smith, who observed, that the culture of the minds of the young was pre-eminently the care of Dr. Priestley. He was proud to

be the member of a family who knew that great man, and were witnesses of the great utility of his active talents and exertions. He was glad of that opportunity to express his admiration of the principles for which Priestley suffered. It might be questioned what relation that toast had with the occasion of the meeting; he thought its connection was by no means so slight as many might imagine. It called forth associations which must be deeply interesting to many gentlemen then present, who forty years ago witnessed such different scenes in this town. To those who were old enough to recollect the occurrences of 1791, it must be matter of much rejoicing that peace and unity could be associated with the name of Priestley.

Mr. G. H. Wells of Warrington, who has just completed his preparatory studies at the University of Glasgow, and who last Session took the degree of A. M. has received and accepted the unanimous invitation of the congregation of Rivington, Lancashire, to become their minister.

Mr. David Lloyd of Llandyssil, South Wales, has taken the degree of A. M. at the University of Glasgow, this session, with honourable distinction.

Rev. Archibald Macdonald has given notice of his intention to resign the congregation at Greenock, at the close of September next.

Rev. James Yates has accepted the pastoral charge of the Congregation in Carter Lane, St. Paul's, London.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our friends in various parts of England, are respectfully informed, that their communications for this Magazine, if sent to the care of MR. HUNTER, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, LONDON, *previously to the last day of every Month*, will reach the Editor in a few days afterwards.

In looking over the stock of our past Numbers, we find the greatest difference occurs in those at the beginning and close of the year. The Magazine commenced in September, and each volume has closed in August. As it is usual, however, for most periodicals to begin and end with January and December, we shall carry on the present volume to December, and commence the eighth volume with January 1834.

THE

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Vol. VII.

The Evidences of Christianity. By William Ellery Channing, D. D.

(Continued from page 340.)

HAVING given my views on the subject of Christian miracles, I now pass to the last topic of this discourse. Its extent and importance will lead me to enlarge upon it in a subsequent discourse; but a discussion of Christian evidences in which it should find no place, would be essentially defective. I refer to the proof of Christianity, derived from the character of its Author.

The character of Jesus was original. He formed a new era in the moral history of the human race. His perfection was not that of his age, nor a copy of the greatness which had long engrossed the world's admiration. Jesus stood apart from other men. He borrowed from none, and leaned on none. Surrounded by men of low thoughts, he rose to the conception of a higher form of human virtue, than had yet been realised or imagined, and deliberately devoted himself to its promotion, as the supreme object of his life and death. Conscious of being dedicated to this great work, he spoke with a calm dignity, an unaffected elevation, which separated him from all other teachers. Unsupported, he never wavered; sufficient to himself, he refused alliance with wealth or power. Yet, with all this self-subsistence and uncompromising energy, his character was the mildest, the gentlest, the most attractive ever manifested among men. It could not have been a fiction, for who could have conceived it, or who could have embodied the conception in such a life as Jesus is said to have led, in actions, words, manners, so natural and unstudied, so imbued with reality, so worthy of the Son of God?

The great distinction of Jesus, was a philanthropy without mixture and without bounds; a philanthropy uniting grandeur and meekness in beautiful proportions; a philanthropy as wise as it was fervent, which comprehended the true wants and the true good of man; which compassionated, indeed, his sufferings from abroad; but which saw in the soul the deep fountain of his miseries, and

laboured by regenerating this, to bring him to a pure and enduring happiness. So peculiar, so unparalleled was the benevolence of Jesus, that it has impressed itself on all future times. There went forth a virtue, a beneficent influence from his character, which operates even now. Since the death of Christ, a spirit of humanity, unknown before, has silently diffused itself over a considerable portion of the earth. A new standard of virtue has gradually possessed itself of the veneration of men. A new power has been acting on society, which has done more than all other causes combined, to disarm the selfish passions, and to bind men strongly to one another and to God. What a monument have we here to the virtue of Jesus! and if Christianity has such a Founder, it must have come from Heaven.

There are other remarkable proofs of the power and elevation of the character of Christ. It has touched and conciliated not a few of the determined adversaries of his religion. Infidelity, whilst it has laid unsparing hands on the system, has generally shrunk from offering violence to its Author. In truth, unbelievers have occasionally borne eloquent testimony to the benignant and celestial virtues of Jesus; and I record this with pleasure, not only as honourable to Christianity, but as showing that unbelief does not universally sear the moral feelings, or breathe hostility to goodness. Nor is this all. The character of Christ has withstood the most deadly and irresistible foe of error and unfounded claims; I mean, time. It has lost nothing of its elevation by the improvements of ages. Since he appeared, society has gone forward, men's views have become enlarged, and philosophy has risen to conceptions of far purer virtues than were the boast of antiquity. But however the human mind may have advanced, it must still look upward, if it would see and understand Christ. He is still above it. Nothing purer, nobler, has yet dawned on human thoughts. Then Christianity is true. The delineation of Jesus in the Gospels, so warm with life, and so unrivalled in loveliness and grandeur, required the existence of an original. To suppose that this character was invented by unprincipled men, amidst Jewish and heathen darkness, and was then imposed as a reality in the very age of the Founder of Christianity, argues an excess of credulity, and a strange ignorance of the powers and principles of human nature. The char-

acter of Jesus was real; and if so, Jesus must have been what he professed to be, the Son of God, and the revealer of his mercy and will to mankind.

I have now completed what I proposed in this discourse. I have laid before you some of the principal evidences of Christianity. I have aimed to state them without exaggeration. That an honest mind, which thoroughly comprehends them, can deny their force, seems to me hardly possible. Stronger proofs may indeed be conceived; but it is doubtful whether these could be given in consistency with our moral nature, and with the moral government of God. Such a government requires that truth should not be forced on the mind, but that we should be left to gain it by an upright use of our understandings, and by conforming ourselves to what we have already learned. God might indeed shed on us an overpowering light, so that it would be impossible for us to lose our way; but in so doing, he would annihilate an important part of our present probation. It is then no objection to Christianity, that its evidences are not the very strongest which might be given, and that they do not extort universal assent. In this respect, it accords with other great truths. These are not forced on our belief. Whoever will, may shut his eyes on their proofs, and array against them objections. In the measure of evidence with which Christianity is accompanied, I see a just respect for the freedom of the mind, and a wise adaptation to that moral nature, which it is the great aim of this religion to carry forward to perfection.

I close as I began. I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is true. It is true; and its truth is to break forth more and more gloriously. Of this I have not a doubt. I know indeed that our religion has been questioned, even by intelligent and good men; but this does not shake my faith in its divine original, or in its ultimate triumphs. Such men have questioned it, because they have known it chiefly by its corruptions. In proportion as its original simplicity shall be restored, the doubts of the well-disposed will yield. I have no fears from infidelity; especially from that form of it, which some are at this moment labouring to spread through our country; I mean, that insane, desperate unbelief, which strives to quench the light of nature as well as of revelation, and to leave us, not only without Christ, but without God. This I dread no more, than I should fear the efforts of men to

pluck the sun from his sphere, or to storm the skies with the artillery of the earth. We were made for religion; and unless the enemies of our faith can change our nature, they will leave the foundation of religion unshaken. The human soul was created to look above material nature. It wants a Deity for its love and trust—an immortality for its hope. It wants consolations not found in philosophy—wants strength in temptation, sorrow, and death, which human wisdom cannot minister; and knowing, as I do, that Christianity meets these deep wants of men, I have no fear or doubt as to its triumphs. Men cannot long live without religion. In France there is a spreading dissatisfaction with the sceptical spirit of the past generation. A philosopher in that country would now blush to quote Voltaire as an authority in religion. Already Atheism is dumb where once it seemed to bear sway. The greatest minds in France are working back their way to the light of truth. Many of them, indeed, cannot yet be called Christians; but their path, like that of the wise men of old, who came star-guided from the East, is towards Christ. I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. It has an immortal life, and will gather strength from the violence of its foes. It is equal to all the wants of men. The greatest minds have found in it the light which they most anxiously desired. The most sorrowful and broken spirits have found in it a healing balm for their woes. It has inspired the sublimest virtues and the loftiest hopes. For the corruptions of such a religion I weep, and I should blush to be their advocate; but of the Gospel itself I can never be ashamed.

The character of Christ may be studied for various purposes. It is singularly fitted to call forth the heart, to awaken love, admiration, and moral delight. As an example it has no rival. As an evidence of his religion, perhaps it yields to no other proof; perhaps no other has so often conquered unbelief. It is chiefly to this last view of it that I now ask your attention. The character of Christ is a strong confirmation of the truth of his religion. As such I would now place it before you. I shall not, however, think only of confirming your faith; the very illustrations which I shall adduce for this purpose, will show the claims of Jesus to our reverence, obedience, imitation, and fervent love.

The more we contemplate Christ's character, as exhibited in the Gospel, the more we shall be impressed with its genuineness and reality. It was plainly drawn from the life. The narratives of the Evangelists bear the marks of truth, perhaps beyond all other histories. They set before us the most extraordinary being who ever appeared on earth, and yet they are as artless as the stories of childhood. The authors do not think of themselves. They have plainly but one aim, to show us their Master; and they manifest the deep veneration which he inspired, by leaving him to reveal himself, by giving us his actions and sayings without comment, explanation, or eulogy. You see in these narratives no varnishing, no high colouring, no attempts to make his actions striking, or to bring out the beauties of his character. We are never pointed to any circumstance, as illustrative of his greatness. The Evangelists write with a calm trust in his character, with a feeling that it needed no aid from their hands, and with a deep veneration, as if comments or praise of their own were not worthy to mingle with the recital of such a life. It is the effect of our familiarity with the history of Jesus, that we are not struck by it as we ought to be. We read it before we are capable of understanding its excellence. His stupendous works become as familiar to us as the events of ordinary life, and his high offices seem as much matters of course, as the common relations which men bear to each other. On this account it is fit for the ministers of religion, to do what the Evangelists did not attempt; to offer comments on Christ's character, to bring out its features, to point men to its higher beauties, to awaken their awe by unfolding its wonderful majesty. Indeed one of our most important functions, as teachers, is to give freshness and vividness to truths which have become worn, I had almost said tarnished, by long and familiar handling. We have to fight with the power of habit. Through habit, men look on this glorious creation with insensibility, and are less moved by the all-enlightening sun, than by a shower of fire-works. It is the duty of a moral and religious teacher, almost to create a new sense in men, that they may learn in what a world of beauty and magnificence they live. And so in regard to Christ's character, men became used to it, until they imagine that there is something more admirable in a great man of their own day—a statesman or a conqueror—than

in Him, the latchet of whose shoes, statesmen and conquerors are not worthy to unloose.

In this discourse, I wish to show that the character of Christ, taken as a whole, is one which could not have entered the thoughts of man, could not have been imagined or feigned, that it bears every mark of genuineness and truth, that it ought, therefore, to be acknowledged as real and of divine original.

It is all-important, if we would feel the force of this argument, to transport ourselves to the times when Jesus lived. We are very apt to think, that he was moving about in such a city as this, or among a people agreeing with ourselves in modes of thinking and habits of life. But the truth is, he lived in a state of society singularly remote from our own. Of all nations, the Jewish was the most strongly marked. The Jew hardly felt himself to belong to the human family. He was accustomed to speak of himself as chosen by God—holy, clean; whilst the Gentiles were sinners, dogs, polluted, unclean. His common dress, the phylactery on his brow or arm, the hem of his garment, his food, the ordinary circumstances of his life, as well as his temple, his sacrifices, his ablutions, all held him up to himself as a peculiar favourite of God, and all separated him from the rest of the world. With other nations he could not eat or marry. They were unworthy of his communion. Still with all these notions of superiority, he saw himself conquered by those whom he despised. He was obliged to wear the shackles of Rome, to see Roman legions in his territory, a Roman guard near his temple, and a Roman tax-gatherer extorting for the support of an idolatrous government and an idolatrous worship, what he regarded as due only to God. The hatred which burned in the breast of the Jew towards his foreign oppressor, perhaps never glowed with equal intenseness in any other conquered state. He had, however, his secret consolation. The time was near, the prophetic age was at hand, when Judea was to break her chains and rise from the dust. Her long-promised King and Deliverer was near, and was coming to wear the crown of universal empire. From Jerusalem was to go forth his law, and all nations were to serve the chosen people of God. To this conqueror, the Jews, indeed, ascribed the office of promoting religion; but the religion of Moses, corrupted into an outward service, was to them the per-

fection of human nature. They clung to its forms with the whole energy of their souls. To the Mosaic institution, they ascribed their distinction from all other nations. It lay at the foundation of their hopes of dominion. I believe no strength of prejudice ever equalled the intense attachment of the Jew to his peculiar national religion. You may judge of its power, by the fact of its having been transmitted through so many ages, amidst persecution and sufferings, which would have subdued any spirit but that of a Jew. You must bring these things to your mind. You must place yourselves in the midst of this singular people.

Among this singular people, burning with impatient expectation, appeared Jesus of Nazareth. His first words were, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." These words we hear with little emotion; but to the Jews, who had been watching for this kingdom for ages, and who were looking for its immediate manifestation, they must have been awakening as an earthquake. Accordingly we find Jesus thronged by multitudes which no building could contain. He repairs to a mountain, as affording him advantages for addressing the crowd. I see them surrounding him with eager looks, and ready to drink in every word from his lips. And what do I hear? Not one word of Judea, of Rome, of freedom, of conquest, of the glories of God's chosen people, and of the thronging of all nations to the temple on Mount Zion. Almost every word was a death-blow to the hopes and feelings which glowed through the whole people, and were consecrated under the name of religion. He speaks of the long-expected Kingdom of Heaven; but speaks of it as a felicity promised to, and only to be partaken by the humble and pure in heart. The righteousness of the Pharisees, that which was deemed the perfection of religion, and which the new deliverer was expected to spread far and wide, he pronounces worthless; and declares the kingdom of heaven, or of the Messiah, to be shut against all who do not cultivate a new, spiritual, and disinterested virtue. Instead of war and victory, he commands his impatient hearers to love, to forgive, to bless their enemies; and holds forth this spirit of benignity, mercy, peace, as the special badge of the people of the true Messiah. Instead of national interests and glories, he commands them to seek first a spirit of impartial charity and love, unconfined by the bounds of tribe or nation, and proclaims this to

be the happiness and honour of the reign for which they hoped. Instead of this world's riches, which they expected to flow from all lands into their own, he commands them to lay up treasures in heaven, and directs them to an incorruptible, immortal life, as the true end of their being. Nor is this all. He does not merely offer himself as a spiritual deliverer, as the founder of a new empire of inward piety and universal charity; he closes with language announcing a more mysterious office, "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity." Here I meet the annunciation of a character as august as it must have been startling. I hear him foretelling a dominion to be exercised in the future world. He begins to announce what entered largely into his future teaching, that his power was not bounded to this earth. These words, I better understand, when I hear him subsequently declaring, that after a painful death, he was to rise again and ascend to heaven, and there in a state of pre-eminent power and glory, was to be the advocate and judge of the human race.

Such are some of the views given by Jesus of his character and reign, in the Sermon on the Mount. Immediately afterwards, I hear another lesson from him, bringing out some of these truths still more strongly. A Roman centurion makes application to him for the cure of a servant, whom he particularly valued; and on expressing in a strong manner his conviction of the power of Jesus to heal at a distance, Jesus, according to the historian, "marvelled, and said to those that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith in Israel; and I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, but the children of the kingdom," that is, the Jews "shall be cast out." Here all the hopes which the Jews had cherished, of an exclusive or peculiar possession of the Messiah's kingdom, were crushed; and the reception of the despised Gentile world to all his blessings, or, in other words, the extension of his pure religion to the ends of the earth, began to be proclaimed.

Here I pause for the present, and I ask you whether the character of Jesus be not the most extraordinary in

history, and wholly inexplicable on human principles? Review the ground over which we have gone. Recollect that he was born and grew up a Jew, in the midst of Jews, a people burning with one passion, and throwing their whole souls into the expectation of a national and earthly deliverer. He grew up among them in poverty, seclusion, and labours fitted to contract his thoughts, purposes, and hopes; and yet we find him escaping every influence of education and society. We find him as untouched by the feelings which prevailed universally around him, which religion and patriotism concurred to consecrate, which the mother breathed into the ear of the child, and which the teacher of the synagogue strengthened in the adult, as if he had been brought up in another world. We find him conceiving a sublime purpose, such as had never dawned on sage or hero, and see him possessed with a consciousness of sustaining a relation to God and mankind, and of being invested with powers in this world; and the world to come, such as had never entered the human mind. Whence now, I ask, came the conception of this character?

Will any say, it had its origin in imposture—that it was the fabrication of a deceiver? I answer, the character claimed by Christ, excludes this supposition, by its very nature. It was so remote from all the ideas and anticipations of the times, so unfit to awaken sympathy, so unattractive to the heathen, so exasperating to the Jew, that it was the last to enter the mind of an impostor. A deceiver, of the dullest vision, must have foreseen, that it would expose him to bitter scorn, abhorrence, and persecution, and that he would be left to carry on his work alone, just as Jesus always stood alone, and could find not an individual to enter into his spirit and design. What allurements an unprincipled, self-seeking man could find to such an enterprise, no common ingenuity can discover.

I affirm next, that the sublimity of the character claimed by Christ, forbids us to trace it to imposture. That a selfish, designing, depraved mind, could have formed the idea and purpose of a work unparalleled in beneficence, in vastness, and in moral grandeur, would certainly be a strange departure from the laws of the human mind. I add, that if an impostor could have lighted on the conception of so sublime and wonderful a work, as that claimed by Jesus, he could not, I say, he *could* not have thrown

into his personation of it—the air of truth and reality. The part would have been too high for him. He would have over-acted it, or fallen short of it perpetually. His true character would have rebelled against his assumed one. We should have seen something strained, forced, artificial, awkward, showing that he was not in his true sphere. To act up to a character so singular and grand, and one for which no precedent could be found, seems to me utterly impossible for a man who had not the true spirit of it, or who was only wearing it as a mask.

Now, how stands the case with Jesus? Bred a Jewish peasant or carpenter, he issues from obscurity, and claims for himself a divine office, a superhuman dignity, such as had not been imagined; and in no instance does he fall below the character. The peasant, and still more the Jew, wholly disappears. We feel that a new being, of a new order of mind, is taking a part in human affairs. There is a native tone of grandeur and authority in his teaching. He speaks as a being related to the whole human race. His mind never shrinks within the ordinary limits of human agency. A narrower sphere than the world, never enters his thoughts. He speaks in a natural, spontaneous style, of accomplishing the most arduous and important change in human affairs. This unlaboured manner of expressing great thoughts, is particularly worthy of attention. You never hear from Jesus that swelling, pompous, ostentatious language, which almost necessarily springs from an attempt to sustain a character above our powers. He talks of his glories as one to whom they were familiar, and of his intimacy and oneness with God, as simply as a child speaks of his connexion with his parents. He speaks of saving and judging the world, of drawing all men to himself, and of giving everlasting life, as we speak of the ordinary powers which we exert. He makes no set harangues about the grandeur of his office and character. His consciousness of it, gives a hue to his whole language, breaks out in indirect, undesigned expressions, showing that it was the deepest and most familiar of his convictions. This argument is only to be understood, by reading the Gospels with a wakeful mind and heart. It does not lie on their surface, and it is the stronger for lying beneath it. When I read these books with care, when I trace the unaffected majesty which runs through the life of Jesus, and see him never falling below his sublime claims, amidst

poverty and scorn, and in his last agony, I have a feeling of the reality of his character, which I cannot express. I feel that the Jewish carpenter could no more have conceived and sustained this character, under motives of imposture, than an infant's arm could repeat the deeds of Hercules, or his unawakened intellect comprehend and rival the matchless works of genius.

Am I told that the claims of Jesus had their origin not in imposture, but in fanaticism—that the imagination, kindled by strong feeling, overpowered the judgment so far, as to give him the notion of being destined to some strange and unparalleled work? I know that fanaticism or a kindled imagination has great power; and we are never to lose sight of it, in judging of the claims of religious teachers. But, I say, first, that except in cases where it amounts to insanity, fanaticism works in a greater or less degree, according to a man's previous conceptions and modes of thought. In Judea, where the minds of men were burning with feverish expectation of a Messiah, I can easily conceive of a Jew imagining, that in himself this ardent conception, this ideal of glory, was to be realised. I can conceive of his seating himself in fancy on the throne of David, and secretly pondering the means of his appointed triumphs. But, that a Jew should fancy himself the Messiah, and, at the same time, should strip that character of all the attributes which had fired his youthful imagination and heart—that he should start aside from all the feelings and hopes of his age, and should acquire a consciousness of being destined to a wholly new career, and one as unbounded as it was new,—this is exceedingly improbable; and one thing is certain, that an imagination so erratic, so ungoverned, and able to generate the conviction of being destined to a work so immeasurably disproportioned to the power of the individual, must have partaken of insanity. Now, is it conceivable that an individual, mastered by so wild and fervid an imagination, should have sustained the dignity claimed by Christ—should have acted worthily the highest part ever assumed on earth? Would not his fanaticism have broken out amidst the peculiar excitements of the life of Jesus, and have left a touch of madness on his teaching and conduct? Is it to such a man we should look for the inculcation of a new and perfect form of virtue, and for the exemplification of humanity in its fairest form?

The charge, of an extravagant, self-deluding fanaticism, is the last to be fastened on Jesus. Where can we find the traces of it in his history? Do we detect them in the calm authority of his precepts—in the mild, practical, and beneficent spirit of his religion—in the unlaboured simplicity of the language with which he unfolds his high powers, and the sublime truths of religion?—or in the good sense, the knowledge of human nature, which he always discovers in his estimate and treatment of the different classes of men with whom he acted? Do we discover this fanaticism in the singular fact, that whilst he claimed power in the future world, and always turned men's minds to Heaven, he never indulged his own imagination, or stimulated that of his disciples, by giving vivid pictures or any minute description of that unseen state? The truth is, that remarkable as was the character of Jesus, it was distinguished by nothing more than by calmness and self-possession. This trait pervades his other excellences. How calm was his piety! Point me, if you can, to one vehement, passionate expression of his religious feelings. Does the Lord's Prayer breathe a feverish fanaticism? The habitual style of Jesus on the subject of religion, if introduced into many churches of his followers at the present day, would be charged with coldness. The calm and the rational character of his piety, is particularly seen in the doctrine which he so earnestly inculcates—that disinterested love and self-denying service to our fellow-creatures, are the most acceptable worship we can offer to our Creator. His benevolence, too, though singularly earnest and deep, was composed and serene. He never lost the possession of himself, in his sympathy with others; was never hurried into the impatient and rash enterprises of an enthusiastic philanthropy, but did good with the tranquillity and constancy which mark the providence of God. The depth of his calmness may be best understood, by considering the opposition made to his claims. His labours were every where insidiously watched, and industriously thwarted by vindictive foes, who had even conspired to compass, through his death, the ruin of his cause. Now, a feverish fanaticism, which fancies itself to be entrusted with a great work of God, is singularly liable to impatient indignation under furious and malignant opposition. Obstacles increase its vehemence, it becomes more eager

and hurried in the accomplishment of its purposes, in proportion as they are withstood. Be it therefore remembered, that the malignity of Christ's foes, though never surpassed, and for the time triumphant, never robbed him of self-possession, roused no passion, and threw no vehemence or precipitation into his exertions. He did not disguise from himself or his followers, the impression made on the multitude by his adversaries. He distinctly foresaw the violent death towards which he was fast approaching. Yet confiding in God, and in the silent progress of his truth, he possessed his soul in peace. Not only was he calm, but his calmness rises into sublimity, when we consider the storms which raged around him, and the vastness of the prospects in which his spirit found repose. I say, then, that serenity and self-possession were peculiarly the attributes of Jesus. I affirm, that the singular and sublime character claimed by Jesus, can be traced neither to imposture, nor to an ungoverned insane imagination. It can only be accounted for, by its truth, its reality.

I began with observing how our long familiarity with Jesus blunts our minds to his singular excellence. We have probably often read of the character which he claimed, without a thought of its extraordinary nature. But I know nothing so sublime. The plans and labours of statesmen sink into the sports of children, when compared with the work which Jesus announced, and to which he devoted himself in life and death with a thorough consciousness of its reality. The idea of changing the moral aspect of the whole earth, of recovering all nations to the pure and inward worship of God, and to a spirit of divine and fraternal love, was one of which we meet not a trace in philosopher or legislator before him. The human mind had given no promise of this extent of view. The conception of this enterprise, and the calm unshaken expectation of success in one who had no station and no wealth, who cast from him the sword with abhorrence, and who forbade his disciples to use any weapons but those of love, discover a wonderful trust in the power of God and the power of love; and when to this we add, that Jesus looked, not only to the triumph of his pure faith in the present world, but to a mighty and beneficent power in heaven, we witness a vastness of purpose, a grandeur of thought and feeling, so original, so superior to the

workings of all other minds, that nothing but our familiarity can prevent our contemplation of it with wonder and profound awe. I confess, when I can escape the deadening power of habit, and can receive the full import of such passages as the following:—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"—"I am come to seek and to save that which was lost"—"He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father in heaven"—"Whosoever shall be ashamed of me before men, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of the Father with the holy angels"—"In my Father's house are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you;"—I say, when I can succeed in realising the import of such passages, I feel myself listening to a being such as never before and never since spoke in human language. I am awed by the consciousness of greatness which these simple words express; and when I connect this greatness with the proofs of Christ's miracles, which I gave you in a former discourse, I am compelled to exclaim with the centurion, "Truly this was the Son of God."

(To be continued in our next.)

*Remarks on the Charge of Persecution brought against
Faustus Socinus, in reply to the Rev. Edmund Kell;
with a Postscript in reply to the Rev. B. T. Stannus.*

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR,—I have always been at a loss to conceive why the modern Unitarians should be so eager to adopt and propagate the charge brought against Faustus Socinus by his enemies, of being accessory to the imprisonment of Francis David. My friend, Mr. Edmund Kell, is one of the last men whom I should have expected to do an act of injustice either to the reputation of the living, or to the memory of the dead. In his tract entitled "*Unitarians not Socinians*," he nevertheless asserts, that Socinus "was himself accessory to the imprisonment for heresy of Francis Davides, a Unitarian, who died under the confinement." The only authority referred to for the proof, is *Toulmin's Life of Socinus*. This excellent work I have again examined with a view to this particular point, and beg leave to state the evidence which it furnishes, at the same time expressing my wish that any of your readers, who are able

to throw further light upon the subject, would favour me by so doing. The substance of what I have now to mention, I have frequently advanced in conversation, but have always been told, perhaps rather by intimation than expressly, that my zeal and prejudices as a Unitarian, naturally made me unwilling to admit a heavy charge against a great leader of the Unitarians. On the contrary, Sir, I am conscious of no other feeling in this case but a desire of truth and justice. I think it improper that an odious accusation of this nature should be repeated year after year, in conversation and in print, against Socinus, because I think it ought not to be uttered without satisfactory evidence against any individual.

It is well known that Socinus was encompassed by rancorous enemies, who eagerly watched opportunities of wounding his reputation. Of all the accusations which they were able to invent, the most serious was that to which the present observations refer. But it is remarkable that with all their zeal to defame Socinus, they have transmitted to posterity no proof or testimony upon this point, but mere surmises, mere unsubstantiated suspicions. The only author, quoted by Dr. Toulmin, as having put the accusation into a definite form, so as to show *how far* and *in what manner* Socinus participated in the persecution of Francis David, is Reland, who speaks thus:—

“It is a vain endeavour to go about to justify Socinus from the persecution exercised on the person of Francis David. *Blandrata had enough interest and influence with the Prince of Transylvania to hinder the imprisonment if he had pleased, and Socinus could easily have brought Blandrata to temper and mildness.*”

The amount of Socinus's guilt, according to this representation—a representation derived from his adversaries, is, that he did not use his influence with Blandrata to induce him to persuade the Prince of Transylvania to set David at liberty. It is taken for granted that Socinus had extraordinary influence with Blandrata, and Blandrata equal influence with the Prince; and it being likewise assumed, that Socinus purposely avoided using his influence in this indirect manner for the liberation of David, all other suppositions are put out of the account, and a surmise is raised into a serious accusation.

Dr. Toulmin gives at length the answer of Socinus to the charges in question, contained in his Preface to the

Dispute with Francis David, and then expresses his own candid and judicious conclusion from that answer, in the following terms, which I the rather quote, because Mr. Kell's reference to Toulmin alone as the authority for the alleged fact, would incline one to suppose, that he admitted the truth of the charge without any doubt or reserve.

"This," says Dr. Toulmin, "is what Socinus offers to prove his innocence in the business of Francis David. It is clear from it, that several aspersions were thrown on him which were evidently false; and this renders suspicious at least the charge against him, of being accessory to the imprisonment of Francis David. The fate of this man, every generous mind will lament, and think it cruel and undeserved. But if the above apology be to be credited, it was brought upon him, not by the instigation and counsel of Socinus, but by his own conduct; and by a conduct not wholly fair and upright: an attention to Socinus's advice would have saved him from the calamity that befel him. Nay, Socinus solemnly protests he consented only to his suspension, and knew not that his imprisonment was a measure determined. And why is not his avowal of his innocence to be regarded? The appeal of a man of his general character, to God the searcher of hearts, seems sufficient to overbalance the unsupported charge and rash suspicion of enemies, who appear by the very manner and style of the charge, to wish to cast an odium upon his name and memory."—*Toulmin's Memoirs of Faustus Socinus*, p. 94.

In regard to the general question of religious toleration, Socinus certainly rose far above the prevailing spirit of his age. He did not, however, go so far as many of the friends of religious liberty do in the present day, in as much as he adhered to the opinion, that imprisonment might in some cases be proper to prevent individuals from propagating pernicious opinions. The same principle is, if I mistake not, even yet maintained by many Protestants and by some Unitarians in our own country. But if a certain Protestant or Unitarian thinks it right to imprison those who endeavour to propagate atheism or infidelity, does this justify any one in asserting, that that Protestant or Unitarian was accessory to the imprisonment of Carlile or of the Rev. Robert Taylor? Certainly any one would repel with indignation a charge which had

no better foundation, or rather no one would be simple enough to make it. Yet merely because Socinus held a similar opinion on this abstract question, he is said to have been accessory to the imprisonment of Francis David.

Postscript in Reply to the Rev. B. T. Stannus.—April 26, 1833.

The preceding remarks were written immediately after the appearance of Mr. Kell's tract above cited. I delayed sending them for publication until I thought it too late, and in the expectation that some Unitarian would repeat the charge in the course of a year or two, I kept them to be used on some future occasion. Such an occasion is now furnished by my esteemed friend, the Rev. B. T. Stannus, whom I believe to be as averse as Mr. Edmund Kell to injustice or defamation in the abstract. Nevertheless, in his Discourse preached at Edinburgh, Dec. 9, 1832, and lately published, I find the following passage:

"Socinus was a persecutor. He imprisoned Franciscus Davides for being a Unitarian. Unitarians will not call themselves after a persecutor, especially a persecutor of their own faith."

Mr. Stannus refers to no authority in support of his assertion. I cannot help suspecting, that without investigation he has adopted it from the Unitarians of the present day, who have never taken the trouble to inquire whether it is true or false; at the same time magnifying it, as is often done in such cases, by making Socinus the principal and not an accomplice in the transaction.

If, Sir, a Calvinist had advanced such a charge against any of the prominent advocates of Unitarianism, I think we should not have been very sparing in our expressions of indignation. What should we say, if the Trinitarians were to trump up a story, that Dr. Priestley poisoned Dr. Price, only because the former opposed the latter in a theological controversy? And how much keener would be our astonishment, if the followers of Priestley eagerly adopted and propagated the accusation? Yet this is pretty much the course pursued by us in regard to one of the most meritorious labourers and sufferers on account of Unitarianism, and one of the most learned, enlightened, and virtuous of all the Reformers; except that, by some capricious fashion, the charge is reiterated among us without rousing any of those feelings which might justly be indulged against such a groundless and careless calumny.

One of our authors has indeed investigated the subject with the most meritorious industry and impartiality, and, I have no doubt, with all the learning and accuracy, of which it is capable. I allude to my friend Dr. Thomas Rees, whose paper in the *Monthly Repository* for 1818 (vol. XIII. p. 382—385), examines the question in all its details, showing that the charge is utterly destitute of foundation, and that it is in the highest degree improbable that Socinus could, by any means, “have brought Blandrata to temper and mildness.”

I am sure the candour of my friends will render it unnecessary for me to apologise for this correction of the mistake into which they have evidently fallen, and I remain, Sir, yours respectfully,

JAMES YATES.

On the Moral Constitution and History of Man.

PART II.—CHAPTER III.

WE have endeavoured to explain three causes which impeded the proper influence of Christianity in the world, and which corrupted its doctrines, viz. 1. The superstitious fears of mankind, which induced them constantly to seek for atonements to propitiate the favour of God. 2. The imaginative philosophy of the Orientals and the Greeks. 3. The dialectics of Aristotle. We now proceed to the consideration of a fourth cause; and that was, the alleged power and patronage of certain men over the destinies of others in a future state.

Christianity was the first religion in the world which carried its views forward distinctly to a future state, and which enjoined men to receive its doctrines, and to obey its precepts under the penalty of a terrible punishment in that state. The sentiments of the Jews were obscure and controverted upon this grand point, and could not be urged *authoritatively* upon them. As for the religion of the Greeks and Romans, it had no practical regard to the sanction of futurity, although their poets indulged in some fables on the subject. Their religion was essentially of a temporal character, regulating their national festivities, customs and laws; and frequently their military enterprises also. They feared the displeasure, or hoped the favour of their gods in the affairs of this world; but they thought nothing of the next. In Plutarch's account of their au-

perstitutions, there is some allusion, indeed, to the fears of futurity, but they did not rest upon any authority. They seem to have been the impressions of individuals, and as he wrote after the commencement of the Christian era, such impressions may have been received indirectly from the Christians.

The tenets of the Oriental Philosophy had been nearly as obscure and uninfluential in this respect, at least so far as they had reached over Europe and Western Asia. As for the mythology of distant India, that country is beyond the sphere of our remarks. Mahomet, indeed, availed himself of the powerful stimulus which a belief in futurity gives to human actions, but he only borrowed that principle, with other things, from Christianity.

I repeat, therefore, that the bold assertion and clear evidence of a future state of existence and responsibility, was still peculiar to Christianity in the first ages; and in that respect, it introduced a principle of action which was altogether new to the world, and of the most powerful character. It verified in the moral world what Archimedes boasted he could do in the natural world, "Give me a fulcrum (said he) for my machine, and I will move the earth." The doctrine of a future state was that fulcrum, and it did change the face of the world. Since the diffusion of Christianity in Europe and Western Asia, the whole state of mankind, whether political, moral, or social, has been in a great measure modified and governed by this principle, and at one time was exclusively so.

This was far from being done, however, in the way intended by our Lord; that is to say, by its influence as a motive to obey his moral precepts, and to cherish the sentiments of liberality and benevolence. On the contrary, it was quickly perceived by the selfish nature of man, how a title to the *patronage*, or an influence over the destinies of others in a future state, would give a most tremendous power to those who claimed it, over all the passions and interests of men even in this present world. At the same time, the gross ignorance and superstition of the multitude favoured the usurpation. Those who usurped this power, indeed, did it not professedly or even consciously to themselves in the first instance. It mingled itself as bad motives frequently do with good ones, so far as to hide itself even from the conscience of the actor, and still more effectually from the view of the public, to whom the good

motive alone was ostentatiously professed. In process of time, however, the bad motive became more and more palpable, and was carried to such a length for worldly purposes, that it became suspected by the people, and could not, in many instances, deceive the actors. In whatever measure, however, or in whatever combination it existed, its effects were most disastrous.

The pretences upon which this power was usurped by one class of men over the rest, were twofold. First, it was supposed that those persons who held offices in the Church, were either endowed with some personal privilege of acting as intercessors with God, or that the ordinances over which they presided, and which they could alone dispense, were the only channels for obtaining the Divine favour and aid. Either way, they assumed an official power which did not belong to private Christians, and of which power the latter were the subjects. In the first age, while the Christians still remembered the doctrine of Christ, that "they should call no man master on earth"—that all were brethren, and had equal and direct access by prayer to their Heavenly Father,—none pretended, not even the Apostles, to assume the functions of *priests*; but in succeeding ages, as we have already noticed, this idea was introduced, and with it the basis of that power to which we have alluded.

A second pretence to the same power, was personal, and not official. Those persons who were eminent for piety and virtue, or for singular gifts, were supposed to have influence with God in favour of their weaker brethren. Now, the favourite idea of superiority in olden times, was attached to the practice of fasting, of penances and privations, by which the body (supposed the source of all moral evil) was mortified, and the soul purified and elevated to a sort of angelic condition. To such persons the multitude therefore paid a voluntary reverence; and they being fanatics themselves, were abundantly persuaded of their own superior holiness and influence. From such dispositions sprang that race of hermits, monks, and visionaries, who abounded in the middle ages, and shared with the official clergy the power of the spiritual empire, which both together erected on the ignorance and superstition of the people. In the earlier centuries the official and personal characters were frequently combined in the same persons; but in course of time they were often dis-

tinguished, and not unfrequently quarrelled with each other about their respective prerogatives, but they never failed to agree in fleecing and tyrannising over the people.

It would be going beyond our bounds, and is not necessary for our purpose, to sketch the progress of this spiritual usurpation up to the 16th century. It will be sufficient to contrast the precepts of the Gospel and the practice of the apostolic age on this subject, with the prevailing doctrines and practice of the Church, when the spiritual power had arrived at its height about the 13th century. By this means we shall see how much the original doctrine of Christianity had been perverted from its true purpose.

Let us observe, first, what doctrine and practice our Lord expressly enjoined on his disciples. He taught them to cultivate humility, and to avoid all pretensions to power. "Ye know (said he) that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them; but it shall not be so with you; but whosoever would be great among you, let him be your seryant; even as the Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister." In the same spirit he commanded them "not to lay up treasures on earth, but to distribute them,"—and to remember "that his kingdom was not of this world." The Apostles faithfully obeyed their Master in this respect, and in their turn enjoined the bishops and elders of the Church (who succeeded them in the ordinary offices of instruction and government), to beware of ambition and covetousness; for it was made known to the Apostles by the spirit of prophecy, that men should arise who would make a gain by their profession of godliness, and assume that kind of authority which they and their Master had disclaimed.

In regard to riches, it has been ingeniously argued, indeed, that the example and rule of poverty given by the Apostles, had a reference to the mean and persecuted state of the Church in the first age; but that, if Providence afterwards enriched the faithful, it was befitting them to allow their pastors to share in their prosperity. Now, this may be admitted in so far as the people might choose to do so of their own accord, and in so far as the pastors employed such voluntary gifts only in those moderate and decent comforts, which the state of society made customary. But the clergy were far from being content with this. The monks, indeed, pretended literally to imitate the po-

verty of our Lord and the Apostles, and some of them actually did so, or rather carried their poverty and privations to a length for which there was neither reason nor precept. Men of this spirit assumed a merit by such conduct, that was altogether preposterous, and opposed both to the examples and warnings of the Gospel. For while our Lord voluntarily submitted to poverty, he was no ascetic. He did not command fastings and mortifications of any kind; on the contrary, he shared in the comforts of life freely, when they came in his way. Upon the same principle, the Apostles were even expressly instructed by the Spirit to denounce a certain race of false teachers, who should arise, "forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, &c." Thus, neither had the clergy any excuse for their covetousness, nor the monks for their mortifications; but through these means, both of them assumed an authority and influence, even in temporal affairs, which was wholly foreign to the spirit of the Gospel.

Let us now see to what extent such usurpations were carried, both over the consciences and property of men, by the 11th and 13th centuries. The power and privileges of the Christian clergy, founded at first as we have seen, on the fears and superstitions which existed generally even in the most cultivated period of the Roman literature; were vastly increased in those ages of barbarity and ignorance, which ensued on the fall of the Western empire. This ignorance was the root and spring of the clerical power; but it received a peculiar direction, and acquired an artificial unity, from the circumstance of being ultimately modelled into the form of a regular hierarchy. By this means, the clergy became a completely organized body, like an army under the command of a single chief, always ready to support every detached corps and member of the fraternity.

It was a natural result of the position of the Pope and his emissaries, that they should cherish the principle on which their power was founded—that was the superstition and ignorance of the people. Thus the principle gave rise to the power, and the power added force to the principle. We do not mean to deny that the ecclesiastical power was not frequently employed for good purposes, and in the absence of all other government, was preferable to a state of anarchy; but still, as it was founded in superstition, and grew up into a despotism, it partly indicated, and partly

produced a retrograde movement in society. And whatever sensitive principles were during the same time fermenting in the mass of society, or by whatever good motives many of the Popes and Bishops were personally actuated in the exercise of this power; the thing itself was opposed to the progress of society, and to the design of Christianity. In this point of view, we shall select the character and actions of some of the Popes in the height of their power, as examples of our general remarks, and as pregnant evidences of the complete metamorphosis, which Christianity (or rather what was nominally esteemed such) had undergone after a lapse of ten centuries.

(Chapter III. to be concluded in our next.)

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR,—Give me leave to inquire, whether any traditional notices are to be found at Glasgow, of a student, who there publicly advocated the Unitarian doctrine more than a century ago. He is thus introduced by Whiston, in his *Memoirs* (1753), p. 265:—

“At the end of March, 1724, I wrote a pretty remarkable letter to a young man, a very honest, inquisitive, deserving friend of mine, Mr. William Paul, a student of Glasgow in Scotland, from whom I have received several very kind letters, which are still preserved. He was then labouring in that University for the restoration of *Christian Liberty* and *Primitive Christianity*, as I had done at Cambridge and elsewhere.”

Whiston proceeds to copy, *verbatim*, his letter to Mr. Paul. It is dated from “Great Russel-Street, Mar. 30, 1724.” The following passages, you will deem, I am persuaded, not uninteresting:—

“The length of your address, and your over-great respect will be best spared hereafter. I shall be a plain hearty friend to yourself, or any other the like pious and sincere inquirers, and therefore I beg you will please to look upon me accordingly. I am very sorry that when you came into these southern parts, 1721, you did not meet with me. Mr. Emlyn is also very sorry you did not go to his bookseller and inquire him out.

“As to your coming hither again, in order to our mutual conversation, and the clearing any difficulties you

seem to be under, we should be very glad to see you, and with the greatest readiness should communicate our advice and assistance; but the journey is so long, and the charges so great, that unless your own private circumstances will admit of it, or you will venture by sea as your great mathematician Maclaurin of Aberdeen, I think, did, we know not how to expect you.

"You seem to me to resolve openly and honestly, to bear the like testimony to some most sacred but long discarded truths of Christianity, in Scotland, which Mr. Emlyn did in Ireland, and I, here, in England. In which honest and open way, we have had some few, and but a very few followers here; while almost all those who are privately of our judgment, temporise, or prevaricate, or use political management to avoid persecution, or the loss of preferment. Dr. Clarke has long desisted from putting his name to any thing against the Church, but privately assists Mr. Jackson; yet does he hinder his speaking his mind so freely as he would otherwise be disposed to do. If the truly great and learned men, who are thoroughly masters of Christian antiquity, would openly declare what they know to have been the ancient doctrines and worship of Christians, I believe the dispute with Dr. Waterland would be at an end. But they are, in general, too worldly wise for that.

"This is the sad state of things among us. Nor is there any prospect of amendment till Providence open some new scene for the revival of primitive Christianity. However, my resolution is one, to do all I can in that glorious design, while God continues my life and health, with the liberty of the press; which, though prodigiously abused by others, yet affords great opportunities to good men to lay their sincere thoughts before the world. *Seris factura nepotibus umbram*. I heartily pray God to bless your and our honest endeavours, for the recovery of the pure and holy religion of our blessed Saviour; and to keep us so undefiled in this wicked generation, that we may not fail of our reward from him, at the great day of his appearing."

I could not quote these unworldly resolutions, without recollecting, how lately I had seen the author of them brought into company not the most appropriate—even named among state-churchmen, who too plainly discovered that they could "temporise, or prevaricate, or use political management," rather than incur "the loss of preferment."

I refer to an advertisement in the "*Morning Chronicle*, June 3, 1833," laudably designed to recommend the lately erected "Little Portland-Street Chapel," to the support of those Christians especially, who reject the distinguishing doctrines, while they generally prefer the forms of the Liturgy, "as by law established." Referring to its grossly unscriptural phraseology, the advertiser says:—

"How often have such theologians as Newton, and Milton, and Locke, and Lardner, and Whiston, and Samuel Clarke, and Law, and Watson, and Paley, deeply sighed over these its impurities and inconsistencies, and ardently longed for their extinction!"

De mortuis nil nisi verum. Not to dwell on the unbecoming and justly regretted reserve of Locke and Newton, and perhaps of Milton and Lardner, what are the claims of "Samuel Clarke, and Law, and Watson, and Paley," to be admitted as eminent Christian reformers, into the society of "honest William Whiston?"

Clarke, indeed, would not for the sake of any preferment, so far "temporise" as to repeat his subscription; yet he could consent to live and die an amply beneficed clergyman, on the credit of a virtually professed adherence to his early engagement.

Law has very fairly recorded, through successive editions of the justly valued *Theory*, his gradual deviations from the theology of his church. Yet though correct and even scrupulous as an author, he could exhibit as a Christian minister, for more than 18 years, and even *usque ad mortem*, the gross anomaly of a *Unitarian* bishop, presiding in the most solemn offices of a *Trinitarian* church; thus *submitting* to derive rank and riches as one of the royally appointed guardians of her faith and worship. If Bishop Law "deeply sighed," it was, I trust, sometimes "over the inconsistencies" into which a disposition "too worldly-wise" had betrayed him, as well as over the "impurities" in the worship of his church. That he "ardently longed for their extinction," I readily believe. That he also "longed" for the worldly advancement of his family, there can be little doubt; and mitres and coronets have distinguished them from the crowd.

Watson had early possessed the invaluable blessing of independence, from the munificent bequest of a grateful pupil. Yet when raised to the bench, he deserted the episcopal duties of a See poorly portioned, to plant a

forest in Westmoreland for the aggrandisement of his descendants. Thus, as Wakefield remarked, he was "beneficed in Dan, while he sojourned at Beersheba." There we know how he "deeply sighed" for a translation from Llandaff. Whether the bishop as "ardently longed" to extinguish the "impurities and inconsistencies" of his church, I am not aware that his justly valued writings have sufficiently discovered.

Paley has been reported to have said, perhaps *jocosely*, that "he could not afford to keep a conscience." Nor can it be easily ascertained, whether he always adhered to the doctrine of his "shuffling chapter on subscription" (as Wakefield correctly described it), in which too many clerical aspirants, who "dared to think one thing, and another tell," have discovered a specious though an insufficient apology.

Thus unfounded are the pretensions of this *quaternity*, however otherwise illustrious, to rank as Christian reformers with "honest William Whiston;" though, by the free sentiments ably vindicated in their writings, they "may kindle," as Johnson says on another occasion, "in thousands and tens of thousand, the flame that burned but dimly in themselves." Nor will their example encourage among *Unitarian* members of a *Trinitarian* church, that consistent public profession by which the new chapel ought to be promptly and largely supported.

Give me leave, in conclusion, to contemplate Whiston in more suitable company, among Christians unworldly like himself, and supremely ambitious of their Master's plaudit; Robertson, Jebb, Lindsey, Evanson, Wakefield; who, finding themselves in spiritual Babylon, or at least in the suburbs of the denounced and devoted city, "conferred not with flesh and blood," but responded to the warning voice, "Come out, and be ye separate."

CIVIS RUSTICUS.

The Press,

Written by the Author of "Corn Law Rhymes," and printed in Sheffield during the progress of the Procession on the passing of the Reform Bill, June, 1832.

GOD said, "Let there be light!"

Grim darkness felt his might,

And fled away:

Then startled seas, and mountains cold,

Shone forth all bright in blue and gold,

And cried—" 'Tis day!—'tis day!"

"Hail, holy light!" exclaim'd
 The thunderous cloud, that flamed
 O'er daisies white;
 And, lo! the rose in crimson dress'd,
 Lean'd sweetly on the lily's breast,
 And, blushing, murmur'd—"Light!"

Then was the sky-lark born,
 Then rose the embattled corn,
 Then streams of praise
 Flow'd o'er the sunny hills of noon;
 And when night came, the pallid moon
 Pour'd forth her pensive lays.

Lo, heaven's bright bow is glad!
 Lo, trees and flowers, all clad
 In glory, bloom!
 And shall the mortal sons of God
 Be senseless as the trodden clod,
 And darker than the tomb?

No:—by the mind of man!
 By the swart artizan!
 By God, our sire!
 Our souls have holy light within,
 And every form of grief and sin
 Shall see and feel its fire.

By earth, and hell, and heaven,
 The shroud of souls is riven:
 Mind—mind alone
 Is light, and hope, and life, and power;
 Earth's deepest night—from this bless'd hour—
 The night of minds, is gone!

The second Ark we bring—
 "The Press!"—all nations sing:
 What can they less?
 Oh, pallid want! oh, labour stark!
 Behold, we bring the second Ark—
 The Press!—the Press!—the Press!

REVIEW.

Memoirs of the late Rev. Thomas Belsham; including a brief Notice of his published Works, and copious extracts from his Diary, &c. By John Williams.

BIOGRAPHY is, of all kinds of writings, the most universally interesting. Its thrilling interest arises out of the circumstance, that in such writings, the events, actions, and fortunes of a whole life, are placed before us in a living speaking picture, which enables us to see and hear all that was done and said by the individual from his death, in the short period of time required to read his memoirs. The secret of our great fondness for reading lives, travels, voyages, histories, and even novels, is our getting by these means through the scenes of years and ages in a few hours. They are steam-engine conveyances on a railway, by which we can start from the cradle and travel on to the grave, of any one of the oldest, the wisest, and the most celebrated of the human race, in the ten-thousandth part of the time which it took him to perform the real journey of life; and in a moment be back again, ready to start from the cradle of another.

This rapid motion through time and space, and all kinds of events, must of necessity be exquisitely delightful to beings constituted as we are. We have to act certain parts ourselves, and we cannot but feel anxious to know how others acted before us. We have a deep stake in the issues of plans and schemes and courses of conduct, and we are almost irresistibly impelled to seek in the records of the past, for examples, instructions, encouragements, or warnings, which may suit our own individual case. For this purpose we turn to biography. For this purpose we peruse the lives of patriarchs and prophets, of sages and senators, of the great and the good, and even of the mean and the vicious. And, as the demand is great, memoirs abound. It is well for him who makes a proper use of them, that they do abound.

But who does make a proper use of the histories of men and their movements? Not he who reads for the mere sake of reading. Not he who reads without either discriminating or appropriating; but he who reads for the sake of improvement, and who for this purpose discriminates carefully between the useful and the useless, and appropriates sedulously whatever can expand his own

mind, and warm and purify his heart. Such a reader will experience an infinite difference in the results of reading the lives of Bonaparte and Washington, of King Henry the Eighth and Franklin, of Calvin and Belsham. He will find, that while a certain amount of pleasure is derived from the reading of the life of any remarkable person, it is only from those whose goodness is equal to their greatness, whose virtues are as varied and soaring as their intellect, that the largest sum of both pleasure and improvement can be obtained.

Of the latter class is the life of Belsham. He was a good as well as a great man, His mental powers were capacious and strong, his moral sentiments and religious feelings were high-toned, and his constitutional temperament was energetic. And as he was educated in the theological system of the vindictive Calvin, it becomes matter of no common interest to learn how the chilling dogmas of Geneva and the Westminster divines operated on his benevolent mind;—whether they improved or injured him—how he came to cast Calvinism from him as an unholy thing—and what was the difference between his dispositions and hopes as a disciple of Calvin, and his dispositions and hopes as a disciple of Christ. And on all these important topics, we are furnished with ample information in the volume by Mr. Williams.

From a memorandum written in 1766, when Mr. Belsham was in the 17th year of his age, Mr. Williams makes an extract, to show that “his mind was deeply imbued with religious principles, though mixed with sentiments of that dark and melancholy kind, which gave a mournful character to his thoughts and expressions, and greatly embittered the period which is usually the most cheerful, the most animated, and the most active portion of human life.” The following are young Belsham’s words:—

“I am, indeed, all over corrupt. Alas! what will become of me? Oh that I could but serve God with diligence and fervency, with zeal and alacrity! but my convictions soon wear off, and I fear my conscience is seared with a red-hot iron.”—“My state of mind through this week has been variable. Sometimes I am, at least I think myself to be, pretty deeply affected with divine things; but at other times I am quite hardened. Sometimes I have some hope that God will adopt me, notwithstanding my unworthiness—at other times, I am ready to sit down in hopeless despair. My convictions, I hope, are pretty frequent, but all very transient; and I much fear that Christ is not formed in my soul. Oh that I may be made a willing subject in the day of

his power! Oh that he would receive me into the number of his elect."

Again, at the same period, he thus expresses himself:—

"I hope I have had some pretty deep convictions this month, but I fear I have too often resisted the Holy Spirit. Sometimes I have been ready to hope, yea, am almost confident that I have the favour of God, and that he is my friend. At other times, I am just ready to fall into despair. And I cannot tell how it is that I do not. My chief difficulties are concerning foreknowledge and election. I am ready to fear that God has not elected me, and that I am irrevocably doomed to everlasting misery. These thoughts sometimes make me so unhappy, that I can scarcely endure myself. My life is a burden to me, and I am almost ready to blaspheme the God of heaven. But Jesus knows the way I take, and I hope will pity me."

In the succeeding thirty pages of the volume—every word of which we should most delightedly transfer to our own pages, did the limits of our periodical allow us so to indulge our own feelings, and so to indulge our readers—we have an unusually affecting picture of Belsham at Daventry Academy, in the 17th, 18th, and 19th years of his age, drawn by himself. Here we see him anxiously preparing himself for a solemn self-dedication to God; and then amidst hopes and fears, and a great conflict of feeling, performing that kind of awful ceremonial which had been prescribed and gone through by Dr. Doddridge. And here, too, we see him with still more intense anxiety, with feelings wrought up to absolute religious phrensy, going through the Calvinistic discipline for coming to the Lord's table. In looking at this part of the Memoirs, it is impossible to resist the impression, that the young and ardent mind will be either crushed under the weight of fears, or burst by the resistless expansion of joys, which the tremendous excitement occasions; and the ravings of insanity issuing from the ruins, proclaim in petrifying tones, the folly and iniquity of so unnatural and barbarous a process. But the mind of Belsham passed through this anti-christian ordeal unbroken, and under the influence of a far "more excellent way" of thinking, he wrote more than forty years afterwards, the following remarks upon his own juvenile account:—

"In these papers, which I believe to be the faithful transcript of my feelings upon the occasions on which they were written, it is curious to observe the distraction of the mind, and the difficulty which the writer experienced in ascertaining the proper share of homage which was to be paid to the Father and to the Son. It is plain, however, that if the Father received the tribute of

homage and fear, the Son possessed that of confidence and love.— I believe those very long-protracted and often fatiguing devotional exercises, though they trenched grievously upon my studies, and prevented my reading books which would have communicated information or improved me in learning, were a very excellent preparative for that earnest anxious inquiry after truth, which eventually terminated in that consistent, delightful, and, I trust, correct system of opinions in theology and morals, which is the solace of my advanced years.”

As we pass through the next twenty pages of the Memoirs, and to the 21st year of Belsham's age, we notice the same religious feelings still actively at work, and observe them swelling to a tempest, as he solemnly dedicates himself to the Christian ministry, and prepares and delivers his first sermon. On the back of the document are the following observations, dated October 27, 1811, when, of course, he was in the 62d year of his age.

“ I remember it well. With what doubts and fears, with what anxiety and depression of spirits did I enter upon this sacred and honourable office! I thought myself unworthy and unqualified for the meanest station in the church; but with what wonder and gratitude do I review the conduct of Divine Providence, and the great goodness of God, after the experience of more than forty years! Through what scenes have I passed! what trials have I endured! what situations have I occupied! what acceptance have I experienced! what means of information have I enjoyed! through what difficulties and perplexities have I been carried! what rewards, and honours, and comforts have I been favoured with! and may I not add, of what usefulness have I been honoured as the instrument! In what an honourable, comfortable, and useful situation am I now placed! ‘ By the grace of God I am what I am.’ And if I have in some views laboured more abundantly and more successfully than others, I most sincerely and gratefully acknowledge, ‘ it is not I, but the grace of God that was with me.’ In what straits and difficulties, in what anxieties and fears have I at times been involved! All has been darkness and gloom, ‘ deep has called unto deep, the waves and billows have gone over me,’ ‘ but in the moment of danger God hath appeared.’ He has dissipated my fears. He hath exceeded my hope. Surely no one has met with such wonderful, seasonable, merciful, unexpected interpositions of Providence as myself.”

(To be continued in our next.)

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, JULY 1, 1833.

THE Twenty-fourth Annual Meeting of the Christian Tract Society, was held in Worship-Street-Chapel, London, May 9. S. Sharwood, Esq. in the Chair. The Secretary commenced the bu-

siness of the Meeting by reading the balance sheet; from which it appeared that there had been Tracts sold in the course of the year to the amount of £81:11s.7d. subscriptions received, £84 19s. and donations of five guineas each from E. Johnston and Robert Heywood, Esqrs. The Report of the Committee was then read, which, after a few prefatory remarks, proceeded as follows: "During the last year there have been reprinted eight of the old Tracts, and three new ones printed, namely, No. 4, New Series, An Address to the Parents of Sunday Scholars, by the Rev. J. C. Means; No. 5. The Blessedness of obeying Conscience, by the Rev. E. Chapman; No. 6. The Sunday Scholar's Progress, by the Rev. J. C. Means. To No. 4, has been appended, The Way to be Happy, detailed in several Rules proper to be observed in all Families; and a thousand copies of the latter have been also printed at 6d. per dozen. In the course of the last twelve months, nearly twenty thousand Tracts have been circulated; of these, £30 worth have been purchased by the Unitarian Society of Belfast, and grants have been made to societies and individuals, wherever the Committee thought that the object of the Society could be promoted. A dissenting minister, to whom one of the grants was entrusted, makes the following excellent remarks, to which the Committee solicit the attention of the public. 'I have succeeded in establishing a Society for the purpose of lending Tracts to any one who is disposed to read them; and in this way I think they will be very useful. This little Society is formed of the ladies of the congregation, two of whom remain in the chapel a short time after each of the services, to lend out Tracts and receive those which were given out on the previous Sunday. And if similar societies were more generally established amongst congregations, I think they would greatly tend to farther the important objects of the London Tract Society; for not only are many thus induced to read, who otherwise would not, but, as a means of promoting sociability (particularly among the younger members of a congregation), by bringing them to unite for a benevolent object, they are highly useful.' It will be seen by the statement annexed, that the Society owes £52, while there is due only £38, showing a deficiency of £14, which is, however, more than compensated by the increased amount of the stock. The Committee regret the deficiency of their pecuniary means, as they are very desirous of publishing a set of Cottage Sermons. This would furnish a variety, on what they have as yet presented to the public, and would supply a want which has been much felt. They have had it also in contemplation to reprint, in a cheap form, the Morning Exercises of the late Rev. Robert Robinson of Cambridge, a little work which abounds in just and striking thoughts, and is written in a style peculiarly adapted to arrest the attention of those for whom the Christian Tracts are chiefly intended. The Committee trust the liberality of the public will enable them to accomplish one or both of these valuable objects; and they hope they may be permitted to state, as some encouragement for the liberality which is solicited, that the affairs of the Society, though not flourishing, are yet in a much more clear and

unembarrassed condition than they have been for years; and further, that such systematic arrangements have been made, that no delay will take place in supplying subscribers and friends with the Tracts they may want."—The Report being read, it was stated that the total number of Tracts printed by the Society amounted to 552,459, and that there were on hand 76,139, the estimated value of which was £470:16s. 8d.—The thanks of the Meeting were next voted to the Officers for the past year; and the following gentlemen were elected for the ensuing year: *Treasurer*, J. Esdaile, Esq.; *Secretary*, Mr. John E. Clennell; *Committee*, Rev. J. C. Means, R. K. Philp and S. Wood, and Messrs. Bracher, Hennell, Dixon, Fernie, Green, and Smallfield. The two following resolutions were then passed, in relation to which the Committee will be glad to receive the opinions of the subscribers, addressed (post paid) to the Secretary, Mr. J. E. Clennell, Hackney, or Walbrook Buildings, London:

I. "That it be referred to the Committee to consider and report at the next Annual Meeting, on the propriety of adopting into the Society's Catalogue, any Tracts published by other Societies or by individuals, which may be regarded as conducive to the objects of this Society."—"II. That this Meeting highly approve of the suggestion contained in the Report, relative to a set of Cottage Sermons, and that the Committee be instructed to take measures for the accomplishment of this object."

MONDAY, May 13, being the First Anniversary of the opening of the new Unitarian Chapel, Plymouth, that event was commemorated by a public dinner at the Globe Inn. Several friends who had intended to be present, were, from various causes, prevented, and others joined the company after dinner. J. Norman, Esq. of Belmont House, Stoke, who had engaged to preside on the occasion, being through indisposition unable to attend, N. Downe, Esq. was unanimously invited to the Chair, with which invitation he kindly complied. A. B. Johns, Esq. officiated as vice-chairman. Among the toasts that were given by the chairman, besides those expressive of respect for various individuals by whose presence the meeting was gratified, or to whose services the congregation was indebted, were the following:—"The King; long may he reign over a free and united people." "The cause of civil and religious liberty." "The great principle of national, social, and individual happiness—an enlightened and cheerful religion." "The cause of Christian Unitarianism; may its spread be rapid, and its beneficial influence general and permanent." "The Plymouth Unitarian Congregation." "The Fellowship Fund Society; and may its members be united in heart, and sincerely disposed to further the important objects for which it was formed." "The Congregational Library and Tract Society; long may they be the means of diffusing truth and promoting virtue." "The Sunday School; may many children have reason to bless the day they entered it." "The memory of Lardner and Priestley, Lindsey and Belsham, and other Unitarian worthies." These toasts were ably prefaced by the chair-

man, and were appropriately responded to. The meeting was addressed by the Rev. W. Evans, the Rev. W. J. Odgers, P. Welsford, Esq. A. B. Johns, Esq. Mr. Bayly of Devonport, Mr. Gill, Mr. Hunt, Mr. J. Hearder, Jun. Mr. Harris, and Mr. Saunders. The Rev. W. Evans ably defended the cause of civil and religious liberty, and pointed out the great benefit resulting from Congregational Fellowship Funds. The Rev. W. J. Odgers referred to "the signs of the times," as being peculiarly favourable to the diffusion of Unitarian views in this country, and noticed particularly the rapid progress of those views in the United States of North America, where there are more than *two thousand Unitarian Congregations*. Remarks were also made upon various other important and interesting topics. The greatest animation and harmony prevailed during the evening. Every one seemed to be highly gratified, and to hope that this would only be the first of a series of similar meetings that have a tendency to unite more closely the hearts and interests of professors of the same faith, and more particularly of members of the same congregation. —*Plymouth and Stonehouse Herald*.

Little Portland-Street Chapel.—This Chapel, erected by the Unitarian congregation formerly assembling in York-street, St. James's, was opened for the worship of the One God, the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, on Sunday the 26th instant. The Morning Prayers were read by the Rev. George Harris, and the sermon preached by the Rev. E. Tagart, the minister of the chapel. The Evening Prayers were read by the Rev. E. Tagart, and the sermon preached by the Rev. R. Aspland. The audience on both occasions was large and the collections liberal. The congregation has made a great effort to provide for the cost of the building, but a sum of no small amount remains to be provided for, in raising which, the congregation relies upon the liberal co-operation of the Unitarian public. The Chapel is in the centre of the fashionable population of London, and remote from every other place of Unitarian worship. It is spacious and commodious; pleasing to the eye, and well adapted to the voice. There is every reason to believe that the congregation assembling in it, will be growingly numerous and respectable. A small pamphlet is just published, entitled, "A Brief History of the Unitarian Congregation, York-Street Chapel, from its Origin in 1824, to its Removal in 1833; by a Member of the Congregation." —*Christian Reformer*.

THE Annual Meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, was held in South-Place Chapel, Finsbury, London, May 29. In the morning worship, the Rev. J. Fullager of Chichester read the Scriptures and prayed; the Rev. James Yates gave out the hymns, and a Sermon on the Harmony of Nature, Providence, and Christianity, from Isaiah xl. 3, 4, 5, was preached by Mr. Harris. The audience was numerous, friends being present from various parts of England, and from Ireland and Scotland.

At six o'clock in the evening, the Public Meeting of the Association was held in the Chapel, John Taylor, Esq. F. R. S. in the chair. The Chapel was crowded. The Rajah Rammohun Roy was present, and Joseph Roberts of Madras, the son of the excellent Missionary of that district; and the meeting was addressed by the Chairman, Mr. Hornby the treasurer, Messrs. Rutt, Lister, Cordell, Joseph Roberts, &c. and by the Revds. Yates, Wood, Tagart, Fullager, Mardon, Dr. Carpenter of Bristol, Murch of Diss, Talbot of Tenterden, Fox, Philp the City Missionary, Harris, &c. The Reports of the Committee were highly interesting and encouraging, and various important resolutions were adopted. We hope in our next to give a more detailed account of this Anniversary, from the Unitarian Chronicle. The Sermon, at the urgent request of the Public Meeting, and the Committee, is published.

The Rev. David Lloyd, who lately finished his preparatory studies for the ministry, at the University of Glasgow, and who took the degree of M. A. with honourable distinction, has, we are happy to say, been unanimously appointed to the important situation of Classical and Mathematical Professor in the Presbyterian College at Caermarthen, South Wales. Mr. Lloyd has also received and accepted the charge of the Congregation of Protestant Dissenters in that town.

The Rev. Henry Hawkes, B. A. has entered on the pastoral office to the Congregation of Unitarian Dissenters at Portsmouth.

Rev. J. Ketley has resigned the congregation at Whitby, Yorkshire, and accepted the invitation of the Society of Ipswich, Suffolk.

WHEN the hoary head at whose presence we have risen up, and the virtuous old whose face we have honoured, are removed to another and a better world, we sorrow not as those who have no hope; we the rather rejoice that since their pilgrimage has been so lengthened, and we have so long had the benefit of their instructions, they sleep in Jesus. When those whose life has been a season of trouble, and who have been called to buffet, one after another, the waves of affliction, are summoned from this trial scene of character, to wear that crown of life which the righteous Judge will give to all who love his appearing, we acknowledge that judgment is tempered with mercy. But when the sun goeth down while it is yet day, on one who as a daughter was ever duteous, as a wife was ever affectionate, as a mother was ever devoted to the care of her offspring—on whose pathway of life happiness smiled, whose society was valued, and to whom friends and relations gladly gave the tribute of respect and affection, the lesson of unquailing confidence in God our Father is harder to learn. Wide is the breach then made in domestic happiness, in social usefulness; and the conjugal and parental heart may well bleed on the disappointment of its fondest hopes. Such is the

breach which has been occasioned by the decease, on the 8th June, aged 28 years, of Mary, the eldest daughter of Mr. Alexander Milns of Rochdale, Lancashire, and wife of the Rev. Franklin Howarth of Bury. But if the sympathy of friends, if virtues hallowed by remembrance, if consistent and ennobling views of Providence and futurity, can assuage affliction, these sources of consolation will not be wanting, and they will prove, we trust, all-powerful in comforting the wounded spirit. To the widowed mourner, to parental hearts, may they impart peace.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our friends in various parts of England, are respectfully informed, that their communications for this Magazine, if sent to the care of MR. HUNTER, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, LONDON, *previously to the last day of every Month*, will reach the Editor in a few days afterwards.

In looking over the stock of our past Numbers, we find the greatest difference occurs in those at the beginning and close of the year. The Magazine commenced in September, and each Volume has closed in August. As it is usual, however, for most periodicals to begin and end with January and December, we shall carry on the present Volume to December, and commence the *eighth* Volume with January 1834.

The stock of early Numbers being heavy, the *first* and *second* Volumes are offered at Two Shillings and Sixpence each. Single Volumes to complete sets, at Four Shillings; and the set of Six Volumes at one Guinea. Single Numbers to complete past Volumes at Fourpence half-penny.

Of the Volume now publishing, a sufficient quantity is printed to supply Subscribers only, their number having now been ascertained.

THE
CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

No. 84.

AUGUST, 1833.

Vol. VII.

[*We copy, with a few omissions and verbal alterations, the account of the late Annual Meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, which appeared in "The Unitarian Chronicle" for July.—EDIT.*]

"THE Annual Meeting of the Association took place on Wednesday, the 29th of May 1833, in the Chapel, South-Place, Finsbury. Divine Service began in the morning at 11 o'clock. The Rev. J. FULLAGAR of Chichester, read the Scriptures and prayed. The Rev. G. HARRIS of Glasgow, preached a most eloquent, interesting, and admirable sermon, from Isaiah xl. 3-5. We are most happy to say, that it is to be printed. Any further notice of it here, is therefore unnecessary. A collection was made after the Service and in the evening, in aid of the Funds of the Association, which amounted to £23.

"The meeting for transacting the business of the Association, was held in the Chapel. It began at 6 o'clock, P.M. and was most numerous and respectably attended. Amongst other distinguished visitors, was the celebrated Rammohun Roy. On the motion of Mr. J. T. RUTT, JOHN TAYLOR, Esq. F.R.S. was called to the Chair.

"The CHAIRMAN said, that on assuming the station to which they had called him, he did so with extreme diffidence, and with a consciousness of his inability to perform the duties which devolved upon the Chairman of such a meeting. He could have wished that a more distinguished individual had occupied that place; but, however distinguished any individual might be, he would say this much for himself, that no one could be more honestly and sincerely desirous of promoting the great interests that had brought them together, than he who had then the honour of addressing them. (Hear, hear.) To those who had the advantage of hearing the eloquent address that had been uttered that morning from the pulpit, by the eloquent preacher who then addressed them, he could have little to say; but he was sure that all must feel the importance of those great truths, which had that day been propounded to them. All must acknowledge the alliance between Christianity and true philosophy, for, as that eloquent

preacher had justly observed, pure Christianity and pure science had advanced hand in hand. In comparison with the dark times of superstition and ignorance, a brighter day had dawned upon the world, and they were now looking forward with sanguine expectations to a happy result of their labours, for the moral, religious, and political improvement of mankind. During the last year, a pleasing instance of the change which had taken place in society had occurred, when those devoted to science, whose names were crowned with honours and distinction, when members of our leading universities, men of all sects and professions, were assembled together to do honour to the name of one so dear to all; need he say it was the name of Priestley. (Loud cheers.) That name had been honoured by all the scientific men of this country congregated for that purpose; professors of universities were heard to deprecate in the strongest language the intolerance which had driven that great man forth from society, and which was a disgrace to the times in which he lived. (Cheers.) The mode of investigation by which Priestley pursued truth, and the manner in which he followed it up, applied equally to every pursuit. It had been said of him truly in science, as in everything else, that setting aside all prejudices, however strong they might be, the evidence that came before him was that by which he was alone guided, and that wherever he found truth he followed it to its consequences, whatever those consequences might be. This was an example which he trusted all would follow. They were met there to consider and promote those views of Christianity which they believed to be correct. This meeting was important, inasmuch as it encouraged them by their mutual support, honestly to stand forward and promulgate within their respective circles, those truths on which they believed the happiness of mankind to depend. They would have laid before them Reports of the proceedings of the Association during the last year, and various Resolutions would be submitted to their consideration, to which he requested their attention. (Hear.)

“ Mr. HORNBY (the Treasurer) said, it now became his duty to lay before them a statement of the accounts of the Association, to which he requested their attention. (For this and other official documents we refer our readers to the printed Report of the Committee.) It was right to observe that the excess of income over ex-

penditure was not to be attributed to the circumstance of their possessing an income more than adequate to the wants they had to supply, for he could bear witness that the Committee had been obliged to be much less liberal than they could have desired, and, indeed, altogether to reject some applications, because they deemed it necessary to retain a balance in hand in order to answer contingencies, and to meet those demands to which they were liable. He trusted, therefore, their friends would not fail to come forward and enable them to render yet more efficient service. He had been requested, although perhaps it did not properly come within his business, as Treasurer, to state to them another account—that relating to the Improved Version Fund—which he would read to them. He begged to lay before the Meeting these accounts.”

“Rev. J. YATES read the Report of the proceedings of the Committee.

“Rev. E. TAGART, Foreign Secretary, read the Foreign Report. It was his pleasing duty to connect with this portion of the general business of the Association, a Report put into his hands by the domestic Missionary. [This Report was here read.] Such was the Report of the City Missionary, the modesty of which bore testimony in a great measure to his merit; and if it should appear to any one that the good effected was not adequate to the means employed, it became them to remember that it was necessary in this world to make great exertions to obtain what appeared to us great good; and, indeed, in order to effect that which we might be inclined to admit as but little. He could not, however, admit, that 100%, 200%, or even 300% had been thrown away, if it saved above 136 children from the influence of evil example and corrupt habits, and placed them in a school under the direction of a benevolent, intelligent, and Christian spirit, by which alone they could be fitted to become useful and religious members of society. In his opinion, this alone was worth all the money expended on such an object. (Cheers.)

“Rev. J. FULLAGAR of Chichester, had been requested to move, which he did with great satisfaction, ‘That the Report of the Committee just read, be received and approved.’ It was not desirable for him to make a long speech, as there were many persons present much more capable of addressing the Meeting, in fact, than himself;

and as the Report was before the Meeting, it would speak for itself. The only point in the Report on which he wished to make a short observation, was in reference to the Dissenters' Marriage Bill. Some persons, he knew, did not think the object very important, but for his part he deemed it of the utmost consequence. This subject had for some time been before the public and the legislature; and his friends in the South were very anxious to have some information as to what had been done in reference to it. They were assured by the Committee, that they were assured by the Committee of Dissenters of the three denominations, (thus it appeared they assured one for the other,) that when the Bill came before the House, the rights of Unitarians would be carefully regarded. So far very well; but he wanted to urge on the Committee, not only that they should take care when the Bill came into the House, but also that it actually did come in. (Hear, hear.) In Belsham's Memoirs, amongst other letters to Sir Benjamin Hobhouse, who, from a violent oppositionist, became a sort of placeman under Lord Sidmouth, was one, in which it was suggested to him, whether it was not a good opportunity for Lord Sidmouth to gain popularity, by granting the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. Whether Mr. Belsham thought better of Sir B. Hobhouse than he deserved, or whether Lord Sidmouth was not so yielding as he supposed, nothing of the kind took place; but it was urged upon the Dissenters not to press the question then, lest they should embarrass Government. He did not wish to be political there, but whether the Radical Government predicted by some of the newspapers were to come or not, he was quite sure that no Government, Whig, Tory, or Radical, would ever give them any thing unless they did embarrass it. (Great cheering.) The only way by which the people could gain any thing, was by embarrassing the Government; for when we found the shoe pinch, we generally slipped it, to give ease to the oppressed part. (Hear, hear.) Therefore he did hope, that if the deputies showed any reluctance to press the Bill, the Unitarians would come forward and push on the measure; not that he wished them to embarrass Government, but he thought they ought to show Government that after waiting so many years, they were determined not to be any longer dilly-dallied with. (Cheers.) He felt much interested in this question; and, as there

were some deputies then present, he could not have taken a more appropriate opportunity of urging them to follow up this subject without delay. He concluded by moving; 'That the Report of the Committee now read be received and approved.'

"Rev. J. MURCH of Diss seconded the motion with the greatest pleasure. He embraced that opportunity of stating to the meeting, a gratifying circumstance connected with the progress of Unitarian principles. Persons living in the metropolis and large towns, were not sufficiently aware how necessary such an institution as this was, in order to promote what they deemed to be the cause of truth in the country. Those only who lived in the country and in the smaller towns, knew of the struggling with difficulties which they had to encounter—difficulties, beneath the force of which they must sometimes inevitably fall, were it not for the support afforded them by such an institution as the present. He made these remarks from practical experience in the district in which he lived. About half-a-year ago, a preacher among the Methodists became convinced of the truths of Unitarianism, in consequence of attending the ministry of a Missionary sent by this Association. (Cheers.) When he became a Unitarian, he established a congregation where never one was established before, at Bungay, in Norfolk, where he was informed it still existed; and he had no doubt, it would be placed on a permanent basis. The other instance was perhaps more important, as showing how much could be done by impartial examination and calm and serious reflection. He met about six months ago with a poor labouring man, who earned about 10s. a-week, and who informed him that he had for some time been a local preacher amongst the Calvinistic Baptists, and delivered his discourses regularly to a very small and humble congregation. He stated that he had been much struck by the absence of all expressions in the Bible confirming the doctrine of the Trinity. His conscience induced him to examine the Scriptures much more calmly, seriously, and impartially, than he had ever done before; the ultimate result of which was, that he became a Unitarian. (Cheers.) And his congregation, as well as the congregation of the other preacher to whom he had alluded, had now become valuable members of the Unitarian denomination. He merely mentioned these instances

in order to show how necessary such a society as this was, for the purpose of encouraging such attempts; and concluded, by calling upon the Unitarian public to give all the assistance in their power to an Association so well worthy of their support. (Much applause.)

"Mr. J. T. RUTT. Before the motion was put, the Meeting would probably allow him to say a few words upon the Unitarian Marriage Bill. He perfectly agreed with the Rev. Mover, that no Ministry could be found in British history who had ever enlarged the liberties of the people, or stripped themselves of any portion of the power which they possessed, until compelled by the people themselves. He might be allowed to remark, that the Dissenters' deputation consisted, amongst others, of members of the Unitarian Committee, who, from his own experience, he could aver, were not the least active members of it, and who would not suffer the other deputies to sleep on the subject, without frequently disturbing their slumbers. (Cheers.) Had the Dissenters at large felt, as they ought long ago, the burthen of the present Marriage Act, and its intolerable disgrace, they would, long ere this, have been emancipated. (Hear.) If the Dissenters generally were earnest in their determination to obtain the repeal of this Act, he would rather hold with them; if he found them slumbering, he hoped the Unitarian deputies would do their best to awaken them; but if, after all, they could not be brought to move, then he would say go on without them. (Applause.)

"Rev. D. DAVISON was imperfectly heard; we understood him to say, that in one or two points, the Report of the Committee was somewhat erroneous. It was well known that some members then present were also members of the Committee of Deputies. The Committee consisted of men of all persuasions; and many members of the established religion had shown a strong disposition to promote their objects. He believed the deputies generally were animated by one feeling, and that the repeal of the Marriage Act would be prosecuted with all possible zeal."

"The CHAIRMAN then put the motion, which was carried unanimously.

"Rev. E. TAGART rose to propose the next resolution. There were many persons then present who had heard the powerful and admirable discourse delivered that

morning from the pulpit. (Loud cheers.) Although he could not help regretting that when such excellent developments of the noble sentiments of religion were delivered before the public, there were not more persons present to receive the gratification arising from the comparison of the bright, encouraging, and delightful views inculcated by the true spirit of religion and of nature, with the gloomy speculations of fanaticism. (Hear.) How different were the doctrines of universal liberty, of devotion to One holy and benevolent Being, whose boundless love displayed itself throughout the universal world of man, to those sentiments which were promulgated in many of the publications which issued periodically from the press, such, for instance, as the 'Pulpit' and the 'Preacher.' It was right—it was but bare justice that they should give all possible encouragement to those gentlemen who came to them from a distance in order to evince their devotion to their principles, and to animate the hearts of their hearers in the great and glorious cause in which they were engaged. He concluded by moving, 'That the cordial thanks of this Meeting be given to the Rev. G. Harris, for his powerful, impressive, and eloquent discourse, delivered this morning; with the expression of our most cordial wishes for the continued and increasing success of his exertions for the dissemination of scriptural Christianity in Scotland.' (Applause.)

"Rev. Dr. CARPENTER seconded the motion with the greatest satisfaction, and concurred with his friend who had anticipated him in the warm eulogium which he pronounced on the address of the eloquent preacher of that morning. He would confine himself to some remarks, which occurred to him in consequence of the latter part of that discourse. It appeared to him that an amazing change had taken place in the public mind, and there were men in some parts of the country who were unacquainted with what was going on in these wonderful times,—who were scarcely aware of events calculated to inspire the young among us, and induce them to strive in their day, as those now old had striven in the dark days that had gone before. (Hear.) The change that had taken place was almost beyond imagination. He could go back to the period when the noble Priestley was driven forth an outcast from his home; but the besotted place whence he was driven, had now become one of the most enlightened parts of the Bri-

tish dominions. If he were to rest on the universal diffusion of intelligence over Britain, a circumstance which in its potent efficacy in forming the mind of man, was to be placed before all others,—how great a change had taken place here. In Birmingham he remembered the time when not 200 people could be collected together without a riot; whereas, now, as many thousands assembled to discuss the most exciting subjects, and separated peaceably. Again, what an amazing engine was property, what power was derived from it, and how imperative a duty was it to exercise that power rightly and well. Considering the universal tendency of all these powers, as towards one common home, he could not but think that this was of all others the time when they could hope to spread abroad their views and principles with the greatest chance of success. It appeared to him, that this change in the public mind was going on much more rapidly in the south, than in the north of Great Britain. Greater changes were now taking place in society than the great empires of the world had yet known, and he held out this as encouragement to his younger friends to carry on with diligence and vigour the great work to which they had devoted themselves. Whilst he was on this topic, he could not help adverting to the painful communication made to them, of the decease of one who promised a long and active career of usefulness, and whose powers of mind and understanding were devoted to the cause of truth and of God. (Hear.) He could not but deplore his removal from the scenes of time; but although one labourer had been called away, the great work must not be stopped; and he would say to the young, be virtuous, be religious, and prepare to take up the good work which is designed for you. He believed there was something in the public mind far beyond sectarianism, and that although the nominal numbers of Unitarians were limited, yet their principles were rapidly extending; and whether they continued as a distinct sect, or whether their principles were embraced by others, made no difference. He concluded by expressing his satisfaction at the doctrines inculcated that morning; and by praying that the excellent preacher might long be permitted to continue his ministry, and to spread among their brethren in the north, the divine truths of Unitarian Christianity. (Cheers.)

“Rev J. FULLAGAR was sure that he only spoke the

sentiments of all, when he proposed that the sermon of the Rev. G. Harris should be printed. (Cheers.) If it were competent for him to do so, he would move that as an amendment; if not, he would suggest it to the Committee.

“Rev. E. TAGART said, that was a matter usually left to the Committee; but after the feeling expressed, there was but little doubt that the sermon would be printed. (Hear.)

“The resolution was then carried unanimously.

“Rev. G. HARRIS (of Glasgow) was received with tremendous applause. He said, I hope you will receive my acknowledgments for the candid, the kind, the truly flattering manner in which you have received my services. If they have at all tended to the promotion of the enlightened and benevolent objects of the Association, I shall indeed be truly gratified. Is it not a good, is it not a holy cause which we are now assembled to promote? What can be more benevolent, what can be more ennobling than to aid the improvement of our race, to advance the glory of our Maker? We are met not to forge fetters for the human understanding, but to do our utmost to break those which have for ages degraded and debased the intellect of man. We meet not to crush fair liberty in her budding, but to send the glad sounds of freedom to those who long have pined in the house of bondage. We meet not to impose tests or to draw up creeds which shall mar the cheerfulness of youth, and lacerate the bosom of age, and stunt and pervert the moral and intellectual faculties of man; ours is the righteous effort to light up hope in the breast of the desponding, to diffuse joy where only misery has dwelt, and to communicate blessedness and happiness to all who now regard creation as a wilderness, and look on man as a loathsome and abhorred outcast. (Cheers.) We meet to uproot that spirit of bigotry, that feeling of sectarian exclusiveness, which has poured out the vials of its bitterness on human society, and made of the disciple of Jesus not a messenger of peace, a brother amongst brethren, but a sectarian Ishmael, whose hand is lifted against all not of the same tribe, and whose heart is shut to all the charities of life, save to those of the same contracted party. You have been induced to band yourselves together, because you feel that much of human happiness, the happiness which alone befits the expectant of another and a better world, the happiness of mind, depends upon the

principles, and particularly the religious principles, which are adopted. The acquisition of correct sentiments of God and man, of Christ and duty, you rightly judge are invaluable, and that the love of truth, of truth without any reference to party, of truth for its own sake, because advantageous to man and honourable to Heaven, should be the passion most warmly cherished, most zealously promoted. (Hear.) It is not fashion, it is not the possession of worldly power, it is not the heaping up of riches, it is not mere pleasure that man should desire and follow after; it is that which casts a charm over every circumstance of human condition, which cheers the cabin of the peasant, and brightens the palaces of the mighty; it is the parent of science, the source of knowledge, the protector of freedom, the shield of virtue, the friend of humanity, which all should strive to gain, and which is alone worthy of the noblest exertions—truth. (Immense cheers.) Think you that those in by-gone years, whose memory is green in our souls, and whose virtues we would emulate, could have fought the good fight of faith so manfully had not truth been their pole-star? Oh no; it was the love of truth which guided their steps, and encompassed their paths, and cheered their wanderings, and changed their prison-cells into the chambers of devotion, and bore them triumphant over the billows of affliction, and crowned them with glory, and led them on from strength to strength to the Eternal Fountain of all intelligence,

‘Still did the mighty flame burn on
Through chance and change, through good and ill,
Like its own God’s eternal will,
Deep, constant, bright, unquenchable.’ (Loud cheers.)

“Of all the truths which affect mankind, those which relate to the Great Spirit of nature are the most important. The history of our race affords abundant and striking testimonies to the fact, that erroneous conceptions of the Almighty Sovereign of heaven and earth, laid the foundation of most of the ignorance and mischief, the tyranny and superstition, which have so long rioted in the degradation of humanity. Yes, unhallowed ideas of the Creator at once darken creation’s glories, and cast a gloom over human prospects. Likening the pure and spotless nature of the Deity to the corruptible creatures of his power, all vindictive and unhallowed passions have been attributed to the Supreme Intelligence: and, he who is Light and Life, and

Love ineffable, has been supposed in vengeance to curse the world of his formation, and to be actuated in his conduct and relations to his creatures, by motives and designs not more repugnant to the purest thoughts and feelings of mortality than they are at war with all the perfections of the Divinity. (Cheers.) In comparison with the holders of such opinions, 'the Indian whose untutored mind sees God in clouds, and hears him in the wind,' entertains much more rational and soul-inspiring sentiments. The wild and rightful inhabitant of the forest, who adores the Great Spirit who spread the leafy bowers of the untrodden woods, and caused the springs to gush forth in the wilderness where there is no man; whose untarnished spirit of honour leads him to be faithful to his friends, and to set at nought the enemies of his tribe; whose breath quits the frail tenement of earth amidst the tendings of affection, or who expires while the death-shouts of the warriors are resounding; who is sustained in either case by the hope of living for ever in the land beyond the mountains which bound his country;—such a creature holds sentiments more in unison with nature, ay, and with the Bible too, Pagan though he may be called, than do those who represent God as a tyrant, and man as a loathsome and detested worm—who regard creation as a wilderness, and parcel out heaven to a selected and favoured few, and people hell with myriads of men and infants—who talk with complacency of a suffering and dying God, and the prospect of whose hereafter is blackened with the image of an almost omnipotent fiend, the seducer of innocence, and the eternal torturer of wronged and agonized humanity. (Loud cheers.)

‘It is not strange
That simple men should rear
The grassy altar to the glorious sun,
And pile it with spring flowers and summer fruits;
And when the glorious sun smiled on their rites,
And made the landscape lovely, the warm heart,
With no unholy zeal, might swell the hymn of adoration.’

Oh, who would not admire such worship, and deem it far less disparagement to Him who filled the sun with light, and launched his glories on the bosom of boundless space, that this bright image of One still brighter should thus call forth gratitude and homage, than those monstrous and superstitious doctrines which led mankind to forsake God their Creator. Over these melancholy perversions, these wanderings from the infinite light which streams in beauty

from the heavens, we mourn in sorrowfulness of spirit whilst we compassionate the darkness from which those perversions had their birth. But we confess our feelings are of a somewhat different kind when we contemplate the fanaticism and superstition of many in various quarters in these our days, when we mark that marvellous rejection of the teachings of nature for the traditions of antiquity, that preference given to creeds before Scripture, that love of the mysterious rather than of the plain, that homage paid to the wisdom of our ancestors, the wisdom that has come down to us in the shape of contradictory creeds and intolerant confessions, which still binds so many otherwise excellent and amiable and pious individuals in intellectual bondage. (Loud applause.)

"It is in view of the prevalence of such doctrines and of the unhappiness of which they are so often productive, that we feel a holy constraint upon us to attempt their extirpation, pernicious as they are to man, dishonourable as they are to God. We cannot sit silent and witness the Majesty of heaven degraded; we cannot but testify that the Bible utters a different voice from what it is usually represented as sending forth. To us the fair face of nature wears no curse; man appears not to us to deserve the libellous description of an English bishop, that he is 'half beast, half devil,' but rather that when the moral and intellectual faculties with which he is endowed are exerted strenuously, and devoted usefully, that it is manifest he stands forth blessed with the image and superscription of his God. To us it seems that the world is not the mere prelude and preparation for hell, or that finite crimes are to be dealt with by an infinity of torture, and the devil, the torturer, assuaging his malice in human agony; but that it is the vestibule of heaven, the passage to the skies, and that he who formed and fashioned the human mind, will, by that chastisement which ever waits upon transgressions, at length enlighten and purify it, a fitting temple for the Spirit of holiness and of love to dwell in for ever. (Applause.) Yes, and I rejoice in thinking that even in the dark regions of Calvinism from which I come, these principles are advancing. Even in Scotland, where religious gloom sits brooding over moral corruption and eternal death, there too light is breaking in; the Bible is coming to be more venerated than the Confession of Westminster divines, and Christ is displacing Calvin. No one

unacquainted with Scotland can conceive the bigotry which a few years since reigned triumphant, and even now exists to a fearful and frightful extent. You have obstacles of mighty force to combat here in a dominant and domineering church, in worldly fashion and sectarian prejudice; and we have all these too, guarded also by recollections of the patriotic struggles of venerated forefathers, and the idea that the glory of those struggles with the tyrant is reflected on the present generation. But mighty though these obstacles be, they are as nothing when compared with that bigotry which with the first elements of knowledge, is rooted in the minds of the young, and sears the intellect of the aged, which reverses the parable of the good Samaritan, and refuses proffered blessings if the profferer be a heretic!—which enforces, as the passport to social intercourse, the utterance of a prescribed shibboleth, which would despoil earth of comfort and heaven of hope to the man, who, acting up to the dictates of individual conscience, dares to worship God contrary to their law. Oh, fearful are the ravages which that bigotry has committed on the peace of families! to the winds has it given conscience, and duty, and truth; and for innocence and integrity, approaching with boldness in the name of Jesus to the throne of grace, has it substituted the trembling slave offering itself a sacrifice to the unknown God, or the hypocrite creeping to the shrine of error, outwardly conforming to observances which are inwardly despised. Misrepresentation is piled upon misrepresentation, the people are scared from inquiry, and dragooned into implicit faith.

“And how shall these evils, these bars in the road to benevolence and freedom and truth, be removed out of the way? Not by mere assertions that truth is mighty and will prevail. Yes, it *will* prevail—it is omnipotent, but it *will* prevail only through human agency, aided and guided by God's blessing. And vast is the variety of means which may be instrumental in the diffusion of truth and liberty. There must be hewers of wood and drawers of water. There must be pullers down of error. There must be the energetic efforts which will expel the money-changers from the temple. There must be those who will complete and ornament the beautiful fabric which shall conduce to human good, and redound to God's glory. In all ways labour is needed. In all it will do good. In

all let it be employed. The only crime against society, the only treason against our Maker, is in doing nothing, or in deeming we must all act according to one mode, or in obliging our brother to walk exactly after our own fashion. There is more than enough to tax our utmost efforts, let them be as powerful as they may. Let not those, therefore, who are only putting on the harness, boast as those who have put it off. Our fathers have laboured, and we have entered into their labours. I rejoice in the success which has attended those labours. I agree with my good friend Dr. Carpenter, that much progress has been made, that intelligence is spreading amongst the people. But the creeds are still the same. The establishments maintain their places. Against them our fathers battled, and our warfare must be unceasing till those creeds, till those establishments are made accordant with the free and beneficent spirit of the gospel of the Saviour.

Different circumstances, I know, require different efforts. It is a question, however, worthy our gravest consideration, whether we are not all of us apt occasionally to imagine that more has been effected than facts will warrant us in concluding to have been accomplished. We hear little or nothing, it may be, of Athanasius or Calvin in our particular circle, and therefore we infer that their authority is departed. I think this is an error, and one which, if not guarded against, is likely to lead to injurious consequences. Its manifest tendency is to make us less active in the removal of error, less energetic in the diffusion of truth. I am persuaded the inculcation of Calvinism has never been more earnest or persevering than at this time. The exhibition of its features may vary indeed according to the audience which may be collected, but in one shape or other it is the never-failing subject. In its grossest forms it is as rife in the villages of our land as it ever was, and in Scotland incessant are the endeavours of pulpit and press, of presbytery and assembly, to force and fix it on the minds and hearts of the people. Yes; I have stood amidst a scene of surpassing loveliness, where earth reflected heaven's brightness, and both were beautiful—where mingled all that could elevate the mind, and calm and purify the heart,—the mountain towering in its magnificence, and the placid lake, a foretaste to humanity of that heaven of peace, of which it was no unapt resemblance—a scene which seemed a place of refuge, a spot

set apart and sanctified from the intrusion of earthly turmoils and worldly afflictions—from whose hills arose the grateful lowing of the cattle rejoicing in their being, and the hum of animated existence lulled the spirit and almost rapt it in elysium, and the glorious sun—fitting image of Him, eye and soul of the boundless universe—pouring his gladdening rays on all the diversified objects, till one sacred flame of incense seemed to arise from creation's altar to the one eternal Father, who had impressed the scene with his own light, and his own love; yes, in such a spot have I joyed to dwell, and whilst my soul drank in full draughts of that beauty and that goodness by which I was surrounded, whilst I deemed that man would feel the sacredness of his rank in the creation as the minister of the thanksgivings of nature, have I heard sounds issuing from the lips of a professed teacher of the religion of Jesus, which broke at once the spell of enchantment which had bound me, which desecrated the temple of God, the temple not made with hands, in which we stood; for those sounds told me that man was ungrateful, and that theological error could almost mar the magnificence and grandeur of nature, and that taught by creeds and not by creation, man could regard his Maker as a tyrant, and turn away his face and his heart from his Father's mercy. The sounds reached my ear in that teacher's address to the people collected on the margin of that lake, that all creation was under the wrath and curse of an angry God, yea, that the infant of a few months and days old, needed as much to flee from the wrath of its Maker, and to seek a refuge from his vindictiveness, as the hoary-headed sinner whose hair had been whitened by a century of years. I turned me from those words of woe, and I looked to the heavens, and the blue firmament seemed a beautiful canopy spread over the earth and earth's inhabitants by a father's benignity; and I looked to the earth, and it smiled on me with its promise of abundance; and I looked on the peaceful waters, and they seemed to me the glorious mirror in which were reflected heaven's purity and earth's luxuriance; and I looked on the little ones by whom I was surrounded, and I could not believe—no creed, no force of created man could make me believe—that those frames were the dwelling-places of iniquity and pollution; and I could trace on them and on all no curse, but that, as at creation's dawn, every thing was good, every thing was

blessed, and the grateful overflowings of my soul united, I trust, with the thanksgivings of nature to the Father of mercies, the God of consolation, of hope, and of peace. (Cheers.) And in thankfulness to the eternal Father let us all join, that we have been emancipated from such bondage to creed idolatry. (Cheers.) It has been said by an eminent divine, lately deceased, Robert Hall, that Unitarians are distinguished by the deference they pay to human authority in religion. It is a preposterous charge; as preposterous as that which he also brings, that those who hold our principles cannot enjoy the beauties of the creation. You have heard what Calvinism makes of the creation—a waste howling wilderness. Your own feelings tells you of the gladness of soul which its beauty and magnificence have imparted to you, as you have wandered through its scenes of loveliness. Let those feelings prompt consistent, unceasing, energetic labours for the advancement of the glory of that God who has imparted that happiness to you. You can best advance that glory by promoting human improvement, freedom, virtue. Man loves God when he loves his brother also. When man is happy, God is glorified. Believing, as I do, this to be the object of the Unitarian Association, I have for this reason, and in order to promote to the utmost of my power a warm feeling in its behalf, arrived amongst you; and I shall return back to the chiller regions of the north encouraged with the kind notice and approbation which you have bestowed upon me, and determined to renew with greater diligence than ever, the efforts which I have made to emancipate the human mind from all bondage, civil and ecclesiastical, and to secure to the human race that glorious liberty which is their birthright and inheritance as children of the living God. (Enthusiastic cheers.)

“Mr. J. T. RUTT moved the next resolution. When he looked to the very important subject contained in the resolution which it became his duty to submit to the Meeting, he felt most peculiar incompetency to the task, to which he knew he was incapable of doing justice. At the same time, he felt gratified in being permitted to come forward once more in public, and state his opinions on that which he had always considered as the most important subject, in which, through a long and varied life, he had been engaged. It was that day, exactly twenty-seven years since he first took part in the first Meeting of the

Unitarian Fund, out of which grew the British & Foreign Unitarian Association. He could not but recollect at that moment, nor did he recollect without personal application, how many valued friends who then stood around him, had since sought the silence of the tomb. Nor could he forget, in especial, that venerable man, whom he had known almost as long as he had known himself, and whose exemplary life needed not his eulogium, Mr. John Marsom, who, throughout the course of a very extended life, was able to enjoy his intellectual powers undiminished, and to employ his talents in the promotion of those objects which he deemed most important—objects which were comprehended in the resolution he intended to propose. It had been his fortune at various times, to know many excellent and distinguished characters, with whom he had the great happiness of passing some of the most gratifying hours of his life, and he had opportunities of observing the influence of Unitarian doctrines on persons whose situations in life were exceedingly various; and in all cases they had produced the happiest effects on their moral and religious conduct. (Hear.) He had mentioned the circumstance of this Association growing out of the Unitarian Fund. One of the most active instruments in its formation, was his friend, Mr. David Eaton, whom he had always admired. Mr. Eaton could look forward much better than himself. He remembered, when the Unitarian Fund was projected, he thought the public were not sufficiently prepared for such a scheme; Mr. Eaton, however, contended that it was: and he was right. The resolution which was put into his hands, spoke in striking language of Unitarianism, as eminently connected with the great interests of mankind, intellectual, moral, and religious. If ever there was a period when they should strive with all their might to propagate those views of religion which could best promote those objects, surely it was the present; when the many had determined, happily determined, no longer to submit to the rule of the few. (Cheers.) The days of privilege had passed away; the days of human rights were rapidly extending; and what could they desire more, than that the many, whilst they advocated their rights—whilst they determined not to cease till they possessed them, should, at the same time, be very mindful of their duties, and that every man should regard his fellow-man, not with the narrow views of creed or sect, but

as part of the great brotherhood of mankind. (Hear.) And how was man so likely to consider his fellow-man in that light, as when he contemplated the paternal character of God; when he was taught to look upon him as a Deity, not favouring a few and rejecting the multitude, but, as the Father of all the families upon the earth, dispensing his tender mercies to all his people? (Cheers.) Surely it was the duty of all who desired to promote such an object, to recommend it, wherever and whenever they had an opportunity, and to recommend it, not merely by precept to others, but above all, to recommend it to the world by the example of their own practice and conduct. He would intrude on them no longer. There were recollections connected with the subject with which he dared not trust himself. He hoped that the Unitarian Association would go on extending and prospering, till it terminated in the way they all desired,—by the world becoming Christian; that word Christian, thus happily superseding the word Unitarian. (Cheers.) The venerable gentleman concluded by reading the resolution:—“That the harmony which subsists between the sublime and comprehensive principles of Unitarian Christianity, and all those influences, whether moral and political, or intellectual, literary, and philosophical, which, under the direction of Infinite Wisdom, conspire to lead the human race onwards to perfection, affords to the professors of this religious system the most delightful encouragement to persevere in the honest and open avowal of their sentiments; and that, in the opinion of this meeting, the present is a time demanding their earnest union, co-operation, and unremitting exertion, to extend the knowledge of their Christian principles, and thus to advance more and more their beneficial influence.”

“Rev. W. J. Fox rose amidst loud cheering. He said, I have been requested to second this motion. That I do so with great pleasure will be readily imagined, because the sentiments embodied therein are those which I am very well known to have endeavoured most earnestly and diligently to promulgate. I shall do so very briefly, because there is much and important business before us, because also we have been already gratified, and I hope we shall be yet further gratified, by listening to those whom we have not always with us on these occasions, and because it would be less gratifying to my feelings

if that resolution were to be adopted under the influence of persuasion instead of a firm conviction of its truth. The great principle expressed in this resolution, the harmony of the divine word, and all divine works and influences, embraces all the objects of human research and industry, all arts and sciences, all systems, political, moral, or sacred, uniting them all by one common bond of union, regarding them as parts of one entire plan of the universal Creator and benignant Father of mankind. The object of human science, as connected with the works of the Creator, is to develope parts of his one uniform plan for the instruction and advantage of his creatures, and to set forth the glory and the goodness of Him who reared the lofty mountains, and who caused the earth to bring forth the fruits of his beneficence, whilst its tendency is to form and elevate the human character, and to expand the mind and the heart, by teaching us to regard whatever the Creator has thought worthy of producing by his power, as entitled to our strongest interest. (Hear, hear.) It gives me the highest gratification to find such a sentiment as this proposed to the Meeting, and adopted, or likely to be adopted, purely for its own sake. It shows a growing sense of the peculiar position which as Unitarians we ought to take. We are most strong in principles such as these, whilst the moment we confine ourselves to the limited objects of a sect, we of all people have the least chance of gaining credit for ourselves, or of producing beneficial results. We differ from other sects in this, that our principles are common to all; nor can Unitarianism be made the watchword of a sect or party. Other religionists form themselves upon some petty subordinate peculiarity, a peculiarity magnified into importance, because it is theirs alone. The effect of this is, that their chief exertions are directed to the maintaining and extending those peculiarities, and they acquire a narrowness of spirit and exclusiveness of character which extends over their other doctrines, and unfits them for the instructors and emancipators of mankind. (Cheers.) We differ from others, because we reject these various peculiarities, and because the principles which we embrace are principles which were held in common by the earliest Christians, as well as by Christians of the present day, through all the diversities of the Christian world, and are susceptible of a useful and practical application in all the concerns of

life. We depart from these petty peculiarities of faith, to take our position as the champions of those principles which all Christians should feel the power of, denying to no one the indulgence of any peculiar and minor notions which he may think proper to mix up with them. Whilst we show these general and enlarged feelings, and pursue this line of conduct, it may fairly be said of other sects as compared with us, that they are employed in cultivating one little spot of ground bearing little but weeds and thorns, leaving it to us to cultivate the boundless field of divine grace, and to exhibit its fruits in all their beauty and richness. (Cheers.) To deviate from this course, to disclaim aught that is good, aught that is beneficial to mankind, would be to imitate that sectarianism which it is our greatest glory to rise above. I never can hear without sorrow and shame any person say, that any object of truth or benevolence is not a Unitarian object. (Cheers.) Every good, every great, and every noble object in the world, must properly and essentially be a Unitarian object. (Hear.) How lamentable an inconsistency is it to hear a man say, I am a Unitarian Christian, and when you call on him to exert himself to send abroad into the country knowledge free from the burthen of taxation, to be told, oh, that is a political and not a Unitarian object! (Immense cheering.) Is it not preposterous to hear a man say, he is a Unitarian Christian, and yet hear him refuse to interpose between the slave and those by whom he is held in bondage, to break and dash to the earth the fetters which bind his limbs, because it is a political and not a Unitarian object? (Cheers.) Is it not preposterous, that those who approve and adhere to a religion, of which the very spirit is freedom, and which places all rational beings on the same common ground of brotherhood, should yet object to exert themselves for the promotion of those institutions which would tend to raise man to the highest degree of physical, moral, and intellectual perfection of which his nature is capable? (Cheers.) These are what I call Unitarian objects; these connect our faith with that of the highest names in which the country glories. Look back at the characters of those most distinguished for elevated devotion, power of intellect, profundity of knowledge, and brilliancy of imagination, and we shall be convinced that the more we seek to raise all men to the same level, the better shall we discharge our duties to

God and to ourselves, and that the shortest way to lead earth towards heaven, is by creating a heaven upon earth. (Loud cheers.) I will not detain the meeting any longer. I trust I need not make a speech on these things, for I think my whole life, or I am much mistaken in the spirit, character, and tendency of that life, is a speech in favour of the principles advocated in this resolution. (Hear, hear.) To promote the objects there stated, has been the purpose nearest and dearest to my heart, whether in addressing my congregation from the pulpit, or the public through the medium of the press; and which I have maintained alike in the Committee-room of the Unitarian Association, and at the Council-table of the Political Union. (Applause.) It is this which has strengthened me in those of my exertions which required the greatest perseverance, which has given me nerve when called to struggle with the oppressor, or to minister consolation to the oppressed. It is this which has made me regardless of opposition and calumny. It is this which I have ever placed before me as the greatest and most important object of human exertion and existence, and the recollection of having done any thing for this great cause would be strong consolation in the moment of dissolution. (Continued cheering.)

“The CHAIRMAN then put the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

“Rev. B. MARDON. The resolution which he had to propose to them, expressed the great interest which they felt in the state of British India, and in the propagation of Unitarian Christianity in that and other countries. He could not avoid reverting to one interesting fact, that they were honoured on the present occasion with the presence of an individual, who, having been brought up in the doctrines of Polytheism, had embraced those of Unitarianism, and who was acknowledged to be one of the most enlightened of our species. (Hear, hear.) He trusted he was not departing from the rules of delicacy, in thus alluding to one who was so justly celebrated for his profound knowledge and vast acquirements, for his extraordinary personal industry, and who, by the mere effort of his reasoning powers, had obtained a victory over the strong instigations of personal interest, and the still stronger pre-conceptions of his original education. (Cheers.) He had favoured them with his presence on a former oc-

casion, nor had he hesitated to come forward now and declare his attachment to the truths of Unitarian Christianity. Born a heathen and an idolater, in very early life he began to suspect and reject the errors of heathenism. He then examined into the evidence in favour of Mohammedanism and Christianity. He found the evidence in favour of Mohammedanism deficient; but that in behalf of Christianity he found satisfactory, and he became a believer in true Scriptural Christianity. Nor was this all; for by his own personal intercourse, he converted to Unitarianism a Missionary who was sent out to India for the purpose of extending the tenets of Calvinism. (Cheers.) They had also then present, a very interesting young person, who had been taken up by the Committee of the Association, in order to impart to his youthful mind those truths which they hoped he would hereafter be the means of promulgating to the natives of British India. (Hear.) He would detain them no longer, but conclude by moving the resolution:—‘That this meeting cannot review the labours of their venerable friend and agent, William Roberts of Madras, without recording their cordial esteem and sympathy towards him and his friends in British India; their hope that the infant Churches now rising in that part of the world, may go on increasing in numbers and prosperity, cultivating Scriptural knowledge, pure devotion, and practical virtue; and may be succeeded by others worthy to enter into their labours, and to sow the seeds of pure Christianity, under the direction, and with the blessing, of that God who giveth the increase.’

“Rev. GEORGE KENRICK seconded the motion with great pleasure. Dr. Carpenter had observed, in relation to what yet remained to be done—a promotion of the Unitarian cause—that wherever power was given, there it was our duty to employ it for good. It was an observation of Mr. Burke, that the power of a despot extends but a very little way; and that even the Czar of Russia on the shores of the Caspian, or the Grand Turk in Egypt, gets such obedience as he can. So it was with the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. In the East Indies, in Bathurst Town, and in distant places, it must be content with doing such good as it can. Though the Association was unable to do all it wished in relation to India, yet they were able to do this—they could send across the waters the voice of Unitarian sympathy. (Hear.) He

had heard with melancholy interest, in the Report read by the Foreign Secretary, a letter from Mr. Theophilus Roberts, in which he stated, that those natives of India of humble rank, who embraced the Unitarian doctrines, had to endure calumny and reproach, and were often unable to obtain employment. In such a situation they deserved the sympathy and encouragement of all Unitarians, for at every hazard they had nobly resolved to preserve that treasure, without which, the proverbial wealth of the Indies would be worthless—independence of mind. (Applause.)

“REV. DR. CARPENTER bore testimony to the merits of the eminent individual before alluded to, and who, ever since his arrival in this country, had been promoting, what he agreed with his excellent friend behind him (Mr. Fox) were Unitarian objects, viz. in making himself acquainted with those things on which the welfare of the immense continent of India and its population depended. Although they had for some time lost sight of him, yet he had not the less been advancing their cause; he had been actively engaged in availing himself of the opportunities afforded him of knowing this wonderful country, and studying the condition, habits, and manners of all classes of its inhabitants. He was not contented with hearing the teachers of one religious denomination alone, but had listened to instructors of every kind, and seized every opportunity of deriving information, which might perhaps be of benefit to others. He (Dr. Carpenter) was of course not a competent judge of the course that eminent person had been pursuing. As far, however, as he was acquainted with it—it was a course of wisdom and usefulness, and his presence there that day was to them most grateful, as it tended to put an end to any rumours of secession from Unitarianism, which his absence might have created. There was, however, another individual (Mr. Roberts), who, by his strenuous, though solitary, labours in India, had rendered himself worthy of their grateful esteem. (Cheers.) Their champions were always deserving of their respect, and he hoped they would not separate without giving him such assurances as would, though distant, cheer his declining years. His son, to whom they looked forward with much expectation, had a father's claim upon him to tread in his father's steps, and if he did not use every exertion to spread abroad improvement, and diffuse

religious education to all around him, he would prove himself unworthy such a father. He had, however, better hopes of him; he trusted that he would emulate his father's character, and prepare himself after his decease to advocate those principles which had been his father's guide through life, and which would be his support in death. (Applause.)

"The CHAIRMAN then put the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

"Mr. JOSEPH ROBERTS was then introduced to the meeting to return thanks, and was very warmly greeted. He said, that called on as he was to speak in a public meeting, he hoped they would excuse any inaccuracy of which he might be guilty in the course of the few words he had to utter. They saw before them one of the natives of British India, who by their kindness was receiving the knowledge to be gained by instruction in this country. For this purpose he was at present pursuing his studies under the care of the Rev. J. R. Beard, considering whose talents and knowledge, as well as the religious and moral culture and domestic happiness which he enjoyed under his roof, he did not think the Committee could have placed him under better guidance. He could never sufficiently express his obligations to the friends of his infancy; but he hoped at some future time, either to bring or send good tidings of his proceedings from his native country to those friends in England who have done so much for his future welfare. Having said thus much, he could only conclude by assuring them, that in no exertion of body or mind should he be wanting to carry their benevolent views into operation, and he hoped they would never have occasion to regret this extension of their benevolence to a stranger. (Loud cheers.)

"Mr. LISTER said that he had a resolution to propose, which was one of great interest, the object of which was to obtain a more correct and perfect system of parochial registration; an improvement from which the greatest advantages would be derived. Independently of its interference in religious feelings, the present system was pregnant with difficulties and expense of no ordinary kind,—of these, from the nature of his profession, he was peculiarly aware. Cases frequently occurred which rendered it necessary to go, not merely into different parishes of the metropolis, but into every county in England, in

order to search for the registry of a burial, a marriage, or a baptism. The expense of such a search in 10,000 parishes, of which the fees alone would be at least 10,000 shillings, was very considerable; and frequently, after having searched all the parishes without success, it became necessary to resort to the secondary evidence of some old family Bible, or other record. (Hear.) An alteration in this system was absolutely necessary, and an improved mode of registration, particularly of marriages, would be of the greatest advantage to every member of the community. It was highly important in a religious and conscientious, as well as in a legislative point of view. One plan that might be adopted, was to make the registers of all meeting-houses good evidence that the persons therein named had been joined together in marriage. Nothing could be more improper than the present plan, which made marriage a system of religion, and compelled persons to go to a church, perhaps for the only time in their lives, to do that which they thought illegal, and which was against their consciences. He trusted also they should not want the support of the ladies in this matter, for he knew a gentleman, a rich man (and he had no doubt that there were hundreds more), who had declared he would never get married till the marriage law was altered. (Hear, and a laugh.) He concluded by moving the following resolution:—‘That this Meeting regards the present Parliamentary inquiry into the state of parochial registration as not the less interesting to Unitarians, because it may lead to the attainment of great social advantages, and most important legal securities for the nation at large; but that, independently of these general and patriotic views, a plan for the universal registration of births, marriages, and deaths, by officers in their civil capacity, will be peculiarly serviceable in various ways to Dissenters from the Established Church; and in particular will facilitate most materially the execution of that measure, at which this Association has aimed from its first origin,—the relief of Dissenters from the operation of the existing Marriage Law.’

“Rev. B. MARDON seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

“Mr. RICHARD TAYLOR rose to move a resolution, relating to the measure now before Parliament for the removal of the disabilities which still existed with regard

to the Jews. He should, however, not take up the time of the Meeting with many observations on the subject. It must be gratifying to them all, to see the last remnant of political intolerance in this country likely to be removed; especially must it be gratifying to them, the lovers of religious liberty, after the generous conduct of the English Dissenters towards the Irish Catholics, to see both uniting for the purpose of extending the same privileges to their Jewish fellow-subjects which they had obtained for themselves. The resolution was as follows: 'That this Association regards with unabated interest and sympathy the efforts of the Jews to obtain relief from all civil disabilities, and anticipates with cordial congratulation the success of the Bill now before Parliament, which, if sanctioned by the Legislature, will raise that venerable portion of their countrymen to the same political position with themselves; but that, looking beyond the defeat of ignorance, defamation, and bigotry, by the triumphant passing of the present Bill, this Meeting trusts the day will soon arrive, when Jews shall be at liberty to enter the Public Schools and the Universities, as freely as the Houses of Parliament, to aim at literary as well as civic wreaths, and to vie with their distinguished brethren, who, to the disgrace of Protestant England, are admitted in Catholic countries to the full advantages of public education, and are thereby enabled in many cases to attain to the highest honours in the medical profession, and in various departments of learning and philosophy.'

"Rev. Mr. TALBOT seconded the resolution. The present generation owed a debt to the Jews. Our ancestors had robbed the Jew, stripped him, and left him on the way-side. It was our duty to take care that we did not pass by on the other side, but rather imitate the conduct of the good Samaritan.

"The CHAIRMAN then put the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

"Rev. R. K. PHILP said, that when he came to this Meeting, he was full of fears, for, as had somewhere been expressed by one of our poets, 'conscience makes cowards of us all.' On the last occasion he met them there, he said that at the end of twelve months, he hoped to tell them, not a longer but a better tale. If they were to ask him what he had done in the course of the past year, he should say that, in a certain sense, he had done nothing—

comparatively nothing,—very little indeed; it must, however, be taken into consideration, that it was at present a Herculean task. When he said that very little had been done, it was certain that much good had been accomplished, which had been briefly explained in the words of the Report. Distressed individuals had been relieved, consolation had been given to the suffering and afflicted, instruction had been given to the young and to the ignorant; yet when he compared the means of the Mission with the demands upon its benevolence, when he took into account the mass of society in the heart of the metropolis, and the state of the young and the old, it appeared to him that he was placed in a sort of forlorn hope. Yet he did not despair, believing, as he did, that no well-intended effort persevered in, could fail of doing some good. And if he were not mistaken, there were more than one or two individuals in that very assembly who, if they had the courage, could say, what in their hearts they acknowledged, that they had derived much benefit from the institution, which the benevolence of the Association had set on foot. One of the best features of the establishment, was the opening of a place of worship, and the Sunday School held there. No doubt much good had been effected by this means. They had 136 children on their books, and the attendance varied generally from eighty to ninety. If they could see the state of the little ones when they first commenced, and compare it with their present state, he was sure they would feel their hearts throb with delight at the good they had accomplished. (Hear.) He did not take any credit to himself, for he had been assisted by younger and more active minds. He said, the last time he met them there, that some unknown friend had sent him fifty articles of coarse clothing, to be distributed amongst the poor, which had been received with great gratitude; and he took the liberty of appealing to the best part of human nature for the continuance and extension of similar benevolence. For six weeks he received nothing. He began to despair, and thought that his eloquence was gone, and his influence amongst the ladies at an end. He was, however, mistaken, for (of course owing not to his eloquence, but to the goodness of the cause) he had received, as they would see in the Report, 500 articles of clothing, which had been distributed; and he could show them the individuals who a few months ago were appalled in rags and tatters,

now comparatively decent and comfortable, owing to their kindness. (Applause.) It had been a matter of regret that, in many cases, the parents of the children were prevented from attending divine worship, because they were unable to come decently dressed. The case was, however, now different; and owing to the assistance of the teachers, some of whom were then present, the children had been materially improved, and afforded a pleasing contrast to the state in which they were when taken wild and untutored from the streets, in which they were learning nothing but vice and iniquity. Now they regularly attend a place of worship; nor do they simply attend, but they take an interest in the proceedings. Amongst other things connected with this subject, which he recollected with great satisfaction, was a visit which he paid to a friend at Hampstead, who, fortunately for him, had a large family of boys and girls of all sizes. In conversing upon the subject of the school, his benevolent lady said to him, 'Would any of my cast-off clothes be of service to your children?' 'The very thing I want,' I replied; my storehouse is like the proctor's barn, with this difference, that I have no authority to compel contributions.' (A laugh and cheers.) The result was, that the lady sent him no less than eighty-two articles. (Applause.) Although at the commencement of the Meeting, he feared lest he might be called on to address them, yet he thought that had he been permitted to say a few words after the addresses of the two gentlemen whose eloquence had that night enraptured their hearts, and wound them up to a pitch of benevolence, he should have succeeded in gaining from his hearers liberal contributions. (Hear.) But though many of the ladies were gone, he had still the gentlemen left. Now he wanted a great many boys' clothes (a laugh), and he hoped he should not appeal to them in vain. A great deal of good might be done with very small means. By the ingenuity of some ladies, a number of warm, comfortable tippets had been made from list. It would have done their hearts good to have seen how delighted the children were with these useful and really pretty articles. He should like now to exchange them for something tasty and more suited to the summer. One lady had made up a score of silk tippets from an old gown. He also wanted some boys' clothes, as he had before said, for many were prevented from coming to

school for want of decent clothing; and if any gentleman who had some to spare, would favour him with his name and address, he would send for them with great pleasure. Little desks had been erected to teach the children to write, and rewards had been given to stimulate them to exertion; and he was happy to say that the school had not cost the Committee one farthing, and he was satisfied they would not want sixpence of the Committee during the ensuing year for that purpose. (Hear, hear.) The Committee had very kindly acquiesced in all he suggested—they paid the rent of the little place which they occupied. All other expenses had been paid by voluntary subscriptions, principally he believed from ladies. (Hear, hear.) He had received a parcel of clothes from some ladies, accompanied with a note, stating that if he met with any extreme cases, and would put a letter into a certain seat in a certain chapel not many yards from where he stood, it would be attended to. He had never made use of the permission so given, and he took that opportunity of saying, that he was extremely grateful for their kindness, and would not fail to apply to them when he found occasion. In another instance, a lady whom he never saw, and whose name he did not know, had sent him £5. He received £5 from another lady, and from a gentleman of the Association he had also received £5. Now, if ladies and gentlemen would but go on in this way, they would very soon be rewarded by the success which would accompany their endeavours. He granted, they had heard a very beautiful description of human nature, a description which had charmed their minds, and excited their admiration. No doubt human nature was a very good thing; but if that reverend gentleman who had painted it in such glowing colours, would but take a turn with him through some of the streets of this metropolis, he would be able to convince him that human nature, however dignified in itself, was like the traveller in the parable, fallen among thieves, by whom it had been left stripped, wounded, and half dead. (Hear, hear.) He had stated in the Report, if the Committee could find a more effective agent, that he was willing to resign his situation; (loud cries of No;) really this was no form of words. He would be most happy to see the conduct of the Mission transferred to a more zealous heart and a wiser head. If, however, the Committee desired

him to go on, he was willing to proceed according to the best of his knowledge and ability. He had every reason to believe, that whatever benefits had been conferred by the Mission, had been received in the most grateful manner, and had been distributed amongst worthy objects. There were perhaps some instances of deception, but these formed a small exception. A friend at that moment suggested to him, that they were in want of teachers for the school. There were five or six young ladies who attended pretty regularly, but these were not sufficient, they wanted four or five active young men; this was all that was necessary to increase the number of their scholars. He hoped he should be able to prevail upon some of them to come forth and lend their aid. He was sure they could not be employed in any way more calculated to display the influence of religion upon the heart, or to ensure the lasting approbation of their own consciences." (Loud cheers.)

"Mr. HORNBY moved a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was carried unanimously.—The Chairman briefly returned thanks, and the meeting broke up at eleven o'clock."

On the Charge of Persecution brought against Faustus Socinus.

To the Rev. James Yates, London.

MY DEAR SIR,—In reference to your observations in the last number of the *Christian Pioneer*, on the subject of the charge of persecution brought against Socinus, I beg to express my regret that I had not made a more extended inquiry into the matter, closely connected as it is with the reputation of that distinguished Reformer. Whilst I do not hold the tenets of Socinus, it is my wish, on a principle of equity and justice, that nothing tending to bring his name into disrepute, should be permitted causelessly to cling to the memory of that eminent man. You are right in "suspecting" that I took up the charge, not from the works of authors cotemporary with Faustus Socinus, but from the writings of "the Unitarians of the present day;" but I distinctly referred to my authority, and if you will examine the latter part of *note* at page 28 of my Discourse, you will perceive that I use these words—*"See Aspland's Plea for Unitarian Dissenters."*

If the charge of "magnifying" the accusation against

Socinus, by making him a principal and not an accomplice in the transaction, be intended to apply to me as an individual, it is respectfully denied to be strictly applicable; as there is no man who will not be convinced that the words used by me cannot by possibility be more clear or more forcible than the following expressions, which occur in the "authority" to which I referred. "Although," says Mr. Aspland, "we revere Socinus as a man of great virtue and an eminent reformer, there is to our ears a discordant note in the sound of his name; *for he was a persecutor*. He approved and connived at, if he did not *procure the imprisonment of Francis Davides* for the honest avowal of his opinion that Socinus was inconsistent, and went contrary to Scripture, in contending for the worship of 'the man Christ Jesus.'" In a *note* at the bottom of page 74 of the "PLEA," the author further says, "there is not, I believe, a single English Unitarian writer who refers to Socinus's treatment of Davides without marked reprobation."

It was to this "authority" I referred; and if it be a fact that I have not distorted its language, or heightened it by imaginary colouring, I trust that I have not been guilty of wantonly "magnifying the charge." Nevertheless, after an examination of articles to which circumstances prevented my referring, when I appended the footnote to my sermon, I do believe that the accusation against Socinus has been greatly exaggerated. But whilst I am willing to acquit him of the crime of procuring or being accessory to the *imprisonment* of Davides, there is a fact to which I cannot shut my eyes. Socinus, as you affirm, may have arisen "far above the prevailing spirit of his age;" but his toleration must have been extremely limited when he requested the suspension of his fellow-labourer (an eminent divine and superintendent of the Unitarian churches in Transylvania), not for "atheism" or "infidelity," but for conscientiously disagreeing with him on Scriptural grounds with regard to a supposed Christian doctrine.* This point in his treatment of the virtuous old Hungarian, will still be considered as at least a minor

* The authority for this statement, is the confession of Socinus himself, as quoted in the 94th page of his *Memoirs* by Dr. Toulmin. It is also a part of the concluding paragraph in Dr. Rees' article "on Faustus Socinus and Francis David," in the *Monthly Repository* for the year 1816, p. 385.

species of persecution. I apprehend that the Bible has given no authority to man to execute, or to request the execution of such a sentence upon any one who believes in the Messiahship of the Redeemer; and this tenet, joined with a virtuous moral conduct, I hold to be the only thing necessary to Christian fellowship.

Need I say that I am glad this subject was taken up by a gentleman of your acknowledged learning and habits of investigation? I hope that after the authorities referred to and the explanation offered, I have done with the subject; and in conclusion, I do not hesitate to say, that so far as any previous statement of mine has tended to give currency to the charge of Socinus having been a principal or an accessory in the *imprisonment* of the eminent Davides, I regret it, and beg hereby to make the retraction.—Believe me, Dear Sir,

With great respect and regard,

Yours very truly,

B. T. STANNUS.

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, AUGUST 1, 1833.

ON Thursday the 13th June last, the Twenty-seventh Anniversary Meeting of the Tract Society for Warwickshire and the adjoining counties, was held in the High-street Chapel, Shrewsbury. The proceedings of the day commenced as usual with a religious service; it was introduced by the Rev. J. G. Robberds of Manchester, and the sermon was preached by the Rev. W. Bowen of Cradley, from John xiv. 9: "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." At the conclusion of the service, the business of the Society was transacted; Eddowes Bowman, Esq. a member of the congregation was called to the chair; the whole of the congregation being invited to remain. As this was the first occasion on which the Society had held a meeting at Shrewsbury, it was expected that several new names would be added to the list of subscribers; and so far was this expectation from being disappointed, that we understood from the pro-secretary, Mr. Hutton of Birmingham, the Society had never opened an account with any fresh congregation (excepting the large societies in Birmingham,) under such favourable auspices.

Soon after the meeting in the Chapel, about thirty members and friends of the Tract Society, dined together at the Raven Inn, Castle-street; the Rev. Richard Astley of Shrewsbury being in the chair. Though several of the friends present had come from a distance, we are sure from the interest their presence and exertions created in the minds of the members of the congrega-

tion generally, they could not consider their time or labour mispent. It was, we believe, the first time the Shrewsbury Unitarians, as such, had met publicly and avowedly for the spread of their peculiar religious opinions. The bond, hitherto so much wanted, will not be quickly broken, and we trust the effort now made to form a closer union between this somewhat isolated Society and the Unitarian body, will be a sustained and successful one. We were gratified at seeing the Rev. J. Kentish of Birmingham present on this occasion, besides whom and the ministers whose names we have already mentioned, there were from a distance, the Revds. S. Bache of Birmingham, C. Wicksteed of Liverpool, J. Palmer of Dudley, S. Hunter of Wolverhampton, &c. These gentlemen spoke to a variety of toasts connected with the advancement of truth and virtue; the meeting maintaining throughout, and with a deep and sustained interest, a strictly religious character. The Rev. J. G. Robberds especially spoke in a most interesting and powerful manner in reference to the City Mission, and District Provident Society, as recently established in Manchester; and to the course of education pursued in Manchester College, York, explaining the liberality of its plan, and defending it from the charge of sectarianism. We only had to regret, in reference to the last toast, that giving birth as it did to such noble and enlightened sentiments, it assumed so exclusive a cast by being followed by no other toast of a similar description. Though an actual majority of the ministers present owed their education either in part or entirely to other institutions—though the preacher and the acting secretary of the day, were among that number—though the late classical tutor of an important (as affects Unitarianism a most important) academical institution in South Wales, was also in that number—no mention whatever was made of any college but that of York, as having any claim upon the gratitude of the meeting, or the Unitarian body at large. We trust this was an oversight; in fact, from the good taste and good feeling with which the meeting was in all other respects conducted, we feel persuaded it was an oversight. But sometimes we have observed similar omissions made from motives neither very enlightened nor very creditable, and we feel ourselves bound to notice them whenever they occur.

We should not neglect to state, that our brethren in Ireland, Scotland, and abroad, were not forgotten on this occasion. The meeting was one of the most pleasant, and in its effects unquestionably one of the most useful, we remember to have attended. We trust Shrewsbury will see another such before many years are gone.

Provincial Meeting, at Bolton.—On Thursday the 20th of June, the annual meeting of ministers of the Unitarian and Presbyterian denominations, was held at Bolton. The Rev. R. B. Aspland of Bristol, introduced the service in Bank-street Chapel, and the Rev. J. H. Thom preached an eloquent and powerful sermon on the universality of the Christian religion, when identified with Unitarianism.

At the meeting in the Chapel after the service, no business of importance was transacted, further than the appointment of the supporter and preacher for the ensuing year, and the election of a sub-committee to consist of the Rev. W. Shepherd and the Liverpool ministers, for the purpose of communicating, as occasion might require, with the London General Committee appointed to watch over the rights of Dissenters. The resignation, however, of the Secretary, the Rev. Edward Hawkes, and the statements which accompanied this announcement, will, we hope, lead to some more decisive steps being taken towards the better promotion of the various objects which this Association has in view.

At two o'clock the meeting adjourned to the inn, where dinner had been provided. Friends to the number of seventy or eighty sat down; the Rev. Franklin Baker being in the chair. After dinner the usual toasts were given, and responded to by the Rev. J. Brookes of Hyde, Francis Darbishire, Esq. of Rivington, the Revds. R. B. Aspland and J. H. Thom. "The memory of Dr. Priestley," gave rise to some very interesting observations from Mr. Shepherd. "Education in Ireland," called up the Rev. T. May of Stand—"the English Universities," the Rev. Chas. Wicksteed of Liverpool—"the University of Glasgow," the Rev. G. H. Wells of Rivington—"Manchester College, York," the Rev. G. Lee of Lancaster, and Mr. Francis Darbishire of Bolton. Other toasts followed, and the meeting broke up about 7 o'clock, the friends dispersing to partake of the refreshment of tea at the houses of different members of the Unitarian societies in the town.

At Royston, Hertfordshire, on the 21st of April 1833, died WILLIAM STALLYBRASS, in the 76th year of his age. This person though born in a humble condition of life, and enjoying in a very limited measure the advantages of education, was distinguished not only by genuine piety and general rectitude of conduct, but by the possession of a strength and vigour of intellect, which he exercised in a manner rarely to be met with in persons in his station in society.

About fifty years ago, he became a member of the Independent Church at Royston, then under the pastoral care of the Rev. W. Jameson, who was succeeded by the Rev. H. Crabb. This gentleman was educated for the Christian ministry under the tuition of Dr. Ashworth, who adopted Dr. Doddridge's method of instruction laid down in his published Lectures, where, under different heads of divinity, the students received a list of the best authors on both sides of every question in theology; these every student was expected to read with care and impartiality. Thus the theological tutors not only allowed the right of freedom of inquiry in religion, but required the exercise of it as a duty. This freedom of inquiry was recommended by Mr. Crabb, and the deceased profited by frequent intercourse with his amiable and enlightened pastor. William Stallybrass being appointed clerk, Mr. Crabb most willingly delegated to him the choice of psalms and hymns from Dr. Watts' Collection; and in the performance

of this duty, he was in the habit of avoiding such hymns as many conscientious and thoughtful Christians could not unite in singing, being in their opinion unscriptural, and which Dr. Watts himself in more mature years (there is reason to believe) regretted having introduced into his Collection.

For some years after the death of his beloved pastor, William Stallybrass, continued his services as clerk; until the succeeding minister, to satisfy a few persons who considered the whole of Dr. Watts' Collection too sacred to be interfered with, dispensed with W. Stallybrass' services, and gave out the hymns himself. Some time after this, W. S. withdrew from the church and public worship, to the manifest regret of several individuals of the congregation, by whom his character was highly appreciated. Though he now no longer frequented public worship, he spent his Sabbaths in diligently reading and meditating upon the Word of God. The extraordinary attainments he made in the knowledge of the Scriptures, are well known to several of his intimate friends; and men of learning and great biblical knowledge who have occasionally conversed with him, have expressed their surprise at his correct and comprehensive views of Revelation.

This may be in part accounted for, from the natural strength of his mind, its freedom from system, and from the unspeakable pleasure he had in searching the Oracles of divine truth; for it may be truly said, that for many years the Bible was his constant companion, and its principles and precepts were treasured up in his heart and became the guide of his daily conduct. Our deceased friend's acquaintance with Scripture was so intimate, that on a text being mentioned, he would immediately cite the verse connected with it, and would also produce various parallel passages to illustrate the subject under consideration.

With respect to his moral character, his master, in whose employment he had been for more than forty-four years, gives this testimony to the writer of this memoir. "He was an Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile." During all the years I knew him, his conduct was marked by the strictest integrity and sincerity both in word and action; he was disinterested, unambitious, and contented with the station in which Providence had placed him. He lately spoke of his death as soon to take place, and the great change which death would effect, with profound awe; he then spoke of faith in God's raising the dead by Christ to immortal life, to all those who believe and obey the Gospel, with more than ordinary animation."

DIED on Wednesday, June 5th, in the 59th year of his age, Mr. JOSEPH MACE, of Tenterden. He has left a widow and five children. He combined with strong domestic and social affections, an ardent love for the interests of liberty and man's welfare. His loss, irreparable to his family, will also be severely felt by many as a friend and neighbour. In his last short, but painful illness, he experienced that support which results from the conviction that God is a wise and merciful Father: though for his children's sake he would have been thankful to have been

spared a few years longer, yet he resigned himself with trustful submission to the disposal of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness.

E. T.

DIED on the 17th of June, 1833, at her father's house in London, MARY, only daughter of R. K. PHILP, aged 27 years. Her amiable disposition and modest virtues endeared her to all who knew her. Her most intimate acquaintance were her greatest admirers. To the poor she delighted in being an angel of mercy. In instructing their children she felt great pleasure. Her fond parent calculated on her being his active coadjutor in the work of benevolence, but her strength was not equal to the exertions required; and the scenes of misery which such a course presented were too powerful for her tender feelings. Heaven has seen fit to terminate her mortal course; she died in peace and hope. Her religious principles were strictly Unitarian, and her character humbly exhibited the purity and simplicity of the sublime religion of Jesus. Owing to a pressure on the brain, the last week of her life was spent in almost constant unconsciousness; when she sweetly breathed her spirit into the hands of God who gave it. She was interred in the burial-ground of the New Gravel-pit Meeting, Hackney, on the 24th instant, Mr. Aspland officiating. Beloved of my heart, *adieu*, till the morning of the resurrection! "I shall go to her, but she will not return to me." R. K. P.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The great length of the account of the Anniversary of the British & Foreign Unitarian Association, obliges us to omit various communications; amongst which are several Notices of Books, and an article by the Rev. J. R. Beard, on Faustus Socinus.

Our friends in various parts of England, are respectfully informed, that their communications for this Magazine, if sent to the care of MR. HUNTER, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, LONDON, *previously to the last day of every Month*, will reach the Editor in a few days afterwards.

In looking over the stock of our past Numbers, we find the greatest difference occurs in those at the beginning and close of the year. The Magazine commenced in September, and each Volume has closed in August. As it is usual, however, for most periodicals to begin and end with January and December, we shall carry on the present Volume to December, and commence the *eighth* Volume with January 1834.

The stock of early Numbers being heavy, the *first* and *second* Volumes are offered at Two Shillings and Sixpence each. Single Volumes to complete sets, at Four Shillings; and the set of Six Volumes at one Guinea. Single Numbers to complete past Volumes at Fourpence-halfpenny.

Of the Volume now publishing, a sufficient quantity is printed to supply Subscribers only, their number having now been ascertained.

THE
CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

No. 85. SEPTEMBER, 1833. Vol. VII.

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

Newport, Isle of Wight, Aug. 3, 1833.

SIR,—In reply to your learned and highly esteemed Correspondent, the Rev. James Yates, who charges me with having fallen into a "mistake," in stating in a Tract, entitled "*Unitarians not Socinians*,"* that Socinus was *accessary to the imprisonment of Francis David*, I only request insertion for a few lines, as my object in that publication was simply to illustrate the distinction between Socinians and Unitarians, by showing that Socinus *persecuted* an eminent individual, who held sentiments now denominated Unitarian, and not to reflect with useless severity on the memory of the dead. My purpose there is sufficiently answered by the admission of the fact of the *persecution* of David by Socinus, and as this cannot be denied by any one who has read the confession of Socinus, that he *consented to the suspension of his opponent from the ministerial office*, I leave the defence of the statement of his being "*accessary to the imprisonment*," to some person who has better means of reference to the original works on the subject. I may however observe, that a person may be *accessary* to a measure in different ways and in various degrees, and in stating that Socinus was accessary to the imprisonment (though I allow it is too strong an expression), I only intended to convey the impression that he was accessary in an inferior degree, and more as the result of a series of events in which he had been concerned, than as any direct act of his own will. I can truly say, that I shall rejoice very much, if the present discussion should throw light on this rather obscure subject, and shall consider that Mr. Yates has done good service to a righteous cause, if he can satisfactorily clear Socinus's memory from the stain with which this transaction has appeared to cloud it. The paper in the Monthly Repository, vol. xiii. page 382, to which Mr. Yates refers, is well deserving of his recommendation for perusal, as the best vindication that has appeared of the conduct of Socinus; but it is somewhat

* *Unitarians not Socinians*, 2d Edition, page 4.—Hunter, London.

singular that the same writer, Dr. Thomas Rees, to whom Mr. Yates attributes it, should in the Historical Introduction to the Racovian Catechism (p. 55), published in the same year, make the following assertion, "There is no room to doubt but that *Socinus acceded to the measure of his imprisonment* as the means of restraining him from the dissemination of his opinions, till the Diet should determine what steps it might be proper to take." This language is at least as strong as mine, and is used by a writer of unquestioned learning and high character. A statement is moreover made by the same author, page 54, which, if correct, would in a degree criminate Socinus. After stating that at the Diet held at Thorda, to take into consideration the conduct of David, the nobility were scandalized at his persecution, and that several deputations were sent to the Prince to urge him to quash the proceedings; Dr. Rees adds, "but Blandrata, *who with Socinus* and others had arrived at Thorda a week previously to the assembling of the Diet, *in order to arrange matters for the prosecution*, successfully employed his influence with the prince, and prevailed upon him to turn a deaf ear to these remonstrances and petitions." As Socinus denies that he was present at Thorda, I am not myself disposed to lay stress upon this statement, but mention it for the sake of *eliciting information* on a historical point, as candour itself could not under such circumstances give Socinus a complete acquittal. On the whole, it will perhaps be allowed that it is difficult for a Unitarian, in referring to the persecution and imprisonment of David, to avoid speaking in somewhat unfavourable terms of the conduct of Socinus. However much he may admire the splendid talents, ardent piety, unbending integrity, and unwavering devotion to the cause of truth, which distinguished Socinus, there is a deficiency of kindness and charity, both in his language and in his conduct towards David, which he would gladly supply. There is something so deeply touching in the story of the sufferings of the venerable confessor, that our sympathies are involuntarily enlisted on his side, and we can scarcely forbear exclaiming, why did not Socinus take more pains to penetrate the *guilty* designs of Blandrata? How could he permit himself to be in any way a tool in such unworthy hands? and why has he not left behind him some decided protest against the persecution of the illustrious sufferer?

The absence of all interference in behalf of one, under whose roof, at all events, he had passed four months, and toward whom he might have felt as a brother, although it may be partly accounted for by the intolerance of the age, is in itself somewhat of a stain on his memory, and accounts for the doubtful manner in which Unitarians, not only of the present, but it appears of his own time, speak of Socinus, in reference to this particular part of his conduct. Even my much respected friend Mr. Yates, eminent as he is alike for candour and a love of truth, whilst expostulating with Mr. Stannus and myself on the subject, uses language that will bear a similar construction, when at page 377, he seems almost to concede that Socinus might be "an accomplice in the transaction." Thanking, however, that gentleman cordially for his correction of my statement, which in a future edition I will cheerfully modify, I remain, Sir, yours respectfully,

EDMUND KELL.

On the Moral Constitution and History of Man.

PART II.—CHAPTER III.

(Concluded from page 363.)

HILDEBRAND or Gregory the Seventh completed the organization of the hierarchy. He proclaimed openly, and acted upon a doctrine which had indeed for a long time inspired his predecessors, but which they dared not push to its extreme consequence—namely, "that the spiritual power was not only independent of the temporal, but superior to it, and that the Pope as its head was the Vicar of Jesus Christ upon earth; and had a right to dispose of kingdoms, and to hold all kings in subjection to him."

To us this appears a most extravagant pretension, and yet there is a certain mixture of truth in the doctrine, which might serve to cover the falsehood associated with it. It is indeed true, that the authority of God is superior to that of man, when they interfere in their exercise, and that moral or spiritual power ought to preponderate, and is destined to preponderate over the power of the sword, upon which rests the dominion of kings. But it is false that God interposes his authority between man and man, in the ordinary affairs of this life. Christ hath said, "who hath made me a judge or a divider of inheritances, &c.

over you?" And again, "render to Cesar the things which are Cesar's, and to God the things which are God's." It is false, that the moral or spiritual power is entitled to rule by the force of carnal weapons; its only legitimate weapon is persuasion, and the obedience of its subjects must be voluntary. If we attend to these distinctions, we perceive that heaven and earth are not more distant, than these opposite views of the ground on which spiritual power ought to rest; yet the mighty pretences of the Church all rested upon the sophistry by which this difference was confounded.

And to conceal the delusion the better, the Church affected an abhorrence to the use of the sword. It only delivered over its culprits, forsooth, to the secular power, to be actually punished. The Church, however, seldom wanted instruments to do its work—magistrates to enforce its decisions against individuals, or kings and subjects against one another. Its pretence of using no carnal weapons, was no better than that of a tyrant who might plead that he put no person to death himself, but merely directed the executioner to do it. And the motives by which it influenced its agents were equally base—the plunder of the victim, the gratification of their own vindictive passions, or the degrading fear of that excommunication which the more noble intelligence of the accused party taught him to despise.

It is but justice to Gregory to admit, that he was partly deluded by the miserable sophistry of the age, and believed himself right in his aggressions. He had likewise an excuse in the anarchy of the times, for using the power with which he found himself invested, to preserve some kind of order and subordination among the warlike and barbarous princes of the time. He had even in view a certain reformation of the Church, by taking the investiture of bishops out of the hands of kings and barons, who had openly made a sale of *vacant* benefices, and by enjoining on the clergy *that* celibacy which the ascetic spirit of the times considered decent in ecclesiastics, and against which the clergy had offended, not only by marriage, but by the practices of concubinage and divorce.

But whatever were his motives, the power he assumed was tyrannical and dangerous. In the execution of his measures, he contended with and triumphed over all opposition, and rendered the court of Rome supreme over

the whole affairs, civil, ecclesiastical, and even military, of Europe; and although we have given Gregory credit for some sincerity, yet the mode in which he used his power, and especially in the case of Henry IV. Emperor of Germany, shows that there was a most lordly arrogance and insatiable ambition, mixed with or at the bottom of all his conduct; and this, in fact, has been the general spirit of the Christian priesthood in all ages. Priests may be denied to some of the ordinary passions and temptations of mankind; but the love of power is their besetting and characteristic sin.

The story of Henry, to which we refer, was this; when he found himself reduced to the necessity of yielding to the Pontiff in the matter of investitures, he crossed the Alps in winter, and came to the fortress of Conusium to solicit absolution of the Church. But the Pope who was residing there (with Matilda the young Countess of Tuscany, a great devotee), forced the Emperor to remain in an open court at the entry of the fortress for three days, in the month of February, with his feet and head bare, and his body covered only with sackcloth. At the end of that period, and with a great deal of difficulty, he at length relented so far as to give Henry the absolution he demanded from the Church, but still forbade him to assume the title of king, to wear the ornaments of his rank, or to perform its functions, till the matter was farther considered.

Here was a Vicar of Jesus Christ for you!—of that Master who forbade his Apostles to exercise dominion like the princes of the earth, and who enjoined the forgiveness of penitents as one of the first duties of his religion. Yet bad as this was, some of his successors carried matters even farther, and abused the power which he had consolidated, to purposes which Gregory probably did never contemplate. I refer more particularly to Innocent III.; but in order to exhibit the development of the system, and its uniform connection and dependency upon one principle, let us take a slight glance at the history of Europe during the period which intervened between the reign of those two Pontiffs.

The leading and governing events during that time, were the Crusades. These wars undertaken in the name of Christ (the Prince of Peace), to obtain possession of Palestine, and to convert infidels and heretics, were inati-

gated and carried on entirely under the direction and authority of the Popes. By them kings were ordered to march, taxes were levied, indulgences granted, and all manner of incitements held out to join in "the holy wars," as they were called. This undisputed right of managing the most important interests which then engaged the attention of Europe, enabled the Popes and their legates or plenipotentiaries (of which they had one or more in every country) to interfere with every thing which could be construed to have the slightest relation to the Church. It empowered them to mediate in the disputes and affairs of all who were absent on the expedition to Palestine; for they were considered the soldiers of the Church, and under its special protection. No creditor could sue a debtor who had taken the cross. No heir could dispute the alienation of family property, although sold or mortgaged on the most ruinous terms. The Church itself became in most instances the purchaser, the mortgagee, or the donee of such estates, and in this manner accumulated immense wealth. These estates might belong to local dioceses and to monasteries, but the Popes knew when and where to tax them, and thus to make a good portion of the wealth flow into their own coffers.

Before this period, the Church had been enriched chiefly by grants of those waste lands which abounded so much after the general depopulation of the 5th and 6th centuries. But these lands the clergy and monks had to cultivate, and that gave them some useful employment, and taught them some good habits. By the 11th century, however, such lands were mostly appropriated, and any increase of revenue from that source was cut off. The alienations and gifts of property to the Church, therefore, during the Crusades, brought along with them no redeeming habits, and were consequently the source of a luxury and profligacy among the clergy, formerly unknown.

The height to which these corruptions were at length carried, and the glaring inconsistencies of the Church, in having become a temporal and military despotism, appeared at length so striking, as to awaken the attention of many, and give rise to numerous sects who impugned the authority of the Roman Hierarchy, and even denounced it as the Antichrist foretold by the spirit of prophecy. Such attacks on the character of the Church, joined to the ul-

timate failure and disasters of the Crusades, would have endangered its authority, if the Popes had not, with their usual policy, contrived to prop it up by a new device. The Crusades themselves furnished them with materials for this purpose. During the course of them (that was for about two centuries), this idea was established and incorporated with the public law of Europe, and under the sanction of the Church, *viz.*—that all those persons who differed in faith from dogmas of the Church, or questioned her authority, whether infidels or heretics, might be lawfully attacked and exterminated. The Popes availed themselves of this idea to turn the tide of the Crusades against the heretical sects above mentioned, and to apply the same means and authority to extirpate them, as had been used against the Saracens. They even went farther, and erected a new institution to support their tottering power, *viz.* the Inquisition; and this may be said to have carried the usurpations of the spiritual despotism to the very acme of effrontery and wickedness.

SALTGOATS, August, 1833.

W. B.

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

SIR,—In your last Number is a paper signed “James Yates,” vindicating Socinus from the charge of being accessory to the imprisonment of Francis David. Mr. Yates and the author of the paper signed R. S. in the *Monthly Repository*, vol. xiii. p. 382, may have succeeded, and yet my esteemed friends Mr. Kell and Mr. Stannus remain perfectly correct in styling Socinus a “persecutor.” Before, however, I give my reasons for thinking that Socinus was a persecutor, I wish to say, that in many respects I hold the character of Socinus in the highest esteem, and that I have no desire to fix on him the brand of a persecutor; but while I wish the question—now that it has been mooted—to be thoroughly investigated, and the exact truth brought to light, I shall be glad if he can be relieved from the odious burden under which he labours.

“To persecute,” says Webster, “is to afflict, harass, or destroy, for adherence to a particular creed.” Socinus both afflicted and harassed, though he *may* not have destroyed Francis David. This he did by harsh language and aspersions. The opinion of David, that Christ ought

not to be invoked, he terms "impious"—a "shameful," "most base, and most pernicious error." And in maintaining his opinion, David, he said, "was abandoning Christ and leading men to Judaism and Moses," since "Christ, if not to be worshipped, was Christ in name only, not in reality."

He also harassed and afflicted David by being a party to his deposition from the ministry, in consequence of his opinion on invoking Christ. This he has himself allowed. His words are thus translated by R. S. in the Monthly Repository:—"I neither consented to any more severe measure against Francis, nor knew of any other design of Blandrata and the brethren in this transaction, nor ever said that I knew of any, than that Blandrata himself would take care that the prince should command Francis to be suspended from his ministerial office (*tantis per a docendi manere cessare*), until a General Synod should, as had been agreed upon, put an end to this controversy concerning the invocation of Christ. To this I call God to witness." Socinus was, then, a party to the deposition of David. What need of more? Is not this persecution? It was not a matter done hastily or inconsiderately. Consultations were held. Instructions were given to Blandrata. Blandrata was to influence the prince. The prince was to command. And in originating and completing this nefarious business, Socinus took his share. If this—this appeal from argument to vituperation—from vituperation to force—from the authority of the Sacred Scriptures to the authority of the civil power—and from the "prison" to the "Synod:" if this is not of the very essence of persecution—what is? "But it was the spirit of the age, and must be charged on it, not on Socinus." I have often heard the remark in reference to other topics as well as this, but hardly even yet know its import. Is it a justification? Then the "ten persecutions" against the early disciples are justified. Then the atrocities of the Inquisition are justified. And if this plea of justification of what was wrong in Socinus be allowed—why not "the spirit of the age" in derogation of what was good? He, as every other man, partook largely of "the spirit of the age;" and by the character of that spirit, for good and for bad, must he be acquitted or condemned. How far the plea may be admitted in extenuation at the bar of Christ, it is not given us to know. With that we have nothing to do,

and it is by confounding the judgment which may be there pronounced with the decision of mere humanity, and perhaps by judging men when we ought to judge principles, that the illusion has obtained currency, which, let it be observed, is pleaded in favour, not of those we wish to condemn, but of those we wish to acquit; whereas, in strict justice, it is applicable to every instance of wrong doing, except perhaps to such as are so far alien from the spirit of the age as to revolt and disgust.

There is another question: Was Socinus accessory to the imprisonment of David? Indirectly I think he was. What was the effect of the language used by Socinus? what was the effect of the appeal to force made by Socinus, but to lead to and justify ulterior measures? Socinus inflamed the minds of people—called in those who were in power—consented to the convoking of a synod with full authority “to put an end to the controversy,” and when, as a consequence, David was imprisoned and perished—can Socinus be held free from blame? He may not have wished the result, but was he not a party to bringing it about? And if matters were proceeding too far to be consistent with his notions of right, why did he not attempt to impose a check? “He may have done.” But where is the evidence that he did? Where is his protest? A truly liberal man would have felt an esteem for his opponent; nay, would have felt himself pledged to his safety. What were Socinus’s efforts to save David? He knew that “no slight danger” impended over David. He was not taken unawares. Yet he did nothing, as far as I know, to prevent the excess even of his own measures of persecution. “He may have made efforts though they are not recorded.” Had he made efforts, he himself would have recorded them in the defence he published against the charges of David’s friends. Yet though he is anxious and uses both argument and sophistry to disprove the several accusations, he neither expresses regret at the imprisonment of David, nor says a word intimating that he had done ought to prevent its taking place, or to mitigate its effects. “It would have been useless.” Probably; yet was it Socinus’s duty; and in neglecting that duty—a neglect which involved the death of David as a consequence of measures in which Socinus took a part, and, as far as appears, a willing part—in neglecting that duty Socinus is implicated

in the death as well as the imprisonment of David. But why "useless?" Because, says R. S., Blandrata was incensed at David, because he had reproved Blandrata for having committed a gross moral offence. This is not the account given by Socinus himself in his "*Epistola Dedicatoria*." At a Synod held at Thord, David had caused certain resolutions to be passed in opposition to the invocation of Christ, contrary, as alleged, to a pledge given both to Blandrata and Socinus. "This," in the words of Socinus, "was the beginning and the torch of that conflagration;" and "Blandrata was much offended at the decrees of that Synod." If, then, the offence was not a personal one, Socinus might have succeeded in mitigating its rancour; and even if it were a personal offence, earnest entreaty and expostulation could hardly have been used in vain. But if Blandrata were inexorable, the prince might have been placated; and when Socinus intimated to David that he was incurring danger by his conduct, David threw himself on the prince, and declared that "he had no fear, but had the means of showing he had done nothing for which the prince should be angry with him." Yet does Socinus appear to have appealed from the servant to the master? The prince knew the prominent part Socinus had taken in the affair, and would hardly have refused him a hearing when wishing to plead for mercy, and that, too, for an opponent. Then there was the party of David—a powerful party. Why did not Socinus unite himself with them, when he saw matters going to an extremity. He meant to appear at the Synod which condemned David—probably as his accuser, but he kept away. Why was he not there in order to prevent excess? He had got his opponent in the toils, and there he left him.

Mr. Yates affirms that Dr. Rees (the R. S. of the Repository) "examines the question in all its details, showing that the charge is utterly destitute of foundation." If I understand my respected friend Mr. Yates rightly, he is here mistaken, for Dr. Rees in the commencement of his very excellent paper, allows that Socinus's "warmest admirers and ablest advocates have not been able wholly to efface" the "imputation" of "acting the part of a persecutor." I shall now translate some parts of what that impartial and exact historian Bock, who has been thought to lean no little to the side of Unitarianism, has written on the subject in his notice of the life and writings of

Socinus, found in the second vol. of his "*Historia Antitrinitariorum*," page 669 et seq. "By his (David's) death Socinus brought on himself blame and hatred from many persons who were on the side of David, and who judged that Socinus and Blandrata were the advisers of the prince in this persecution and death, and this opinion is not without all show of reason. Who can allow himself to be persuaded, that Socinus did not give his vote in favour of the sentence against David, since he did not plead with the prince in opposition to it, but rather allowed what Blandrata suggested to the prince to be carried into effect, without any interposition or discomposure. The imputations laid to his charge in this matter, he laboured to remove in his dedicatory letter to the Transylvanian ministers, of his account of the controversy with David; but they altogether dissented from him, calling to mind, that in the whole of this business the prince did nothing without the advice of Blandrata, and that Blandrata came to no determination himself, nor suggested any thing to the prince, without having first consulted his oracle Socinus. Socinus wearied with the accusation respecting the death of David, retired into Poland, and sought for admittance into communion with the churches there, who worshipped the Father as the only God. But he met with a repulse in the Synod held at Racow, in May of the year 1580, both on account of some persons' hatred, which the dispute with David, or rather the incarceration and death of his adversary, had brought upon him, and also on account of disagreement in points of doctrine."

It is but too evident, then, that there are grounds for regarding Socinus as a persecutor. On the minor charge—that of suspending David, he is confessedly guilty. Indirectly, at least, he was influential in his imprisonment and death. The charge is not of modern origin. The friends of David preferred it—"the warmest admirers and ablest advocates of Socinus have not been able wholly to efface it." The prevalence of it drove him from Transylvania, and in Poland it kept him from communion with his brethren. It was preferred as soon as the actions which occasioned it were done; it was answered after an interval of fifteen years. The answer is, in some points evasive and jesuitical; in others, it by omission implicates the writer, and it failed to convince those to whom it was addressed.

JOHN R. BEARD.

MANCHESTER, July 19, 1833.

To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.

JULY 25, 1833.

SIR,—Of the learned theologians noticed by Sandius in his *Bibliotheca Antitrinitariorum*, the first, as you will probably recollect, is “Wolfgangus Fabricius Capito,” one of the ministers of Strasburg, honourably distinguished by the churches of Transylvania, as “*vir pietate et eruditione insignis*.” From a short article in *Nov. Dict. Hist.* (1789, n. 387), it appears that he died of the plague in 1542, aged 63. Capito had been the friend of Bucer; also of Ecolampadius, whose widow he married, and became his biographer. From a second marriage, he derived a help-mate in the pulpit as in the parlour—“*La seconde se piquoit de bel-esprit, et s'avisait même de prêcher, lorsque son mari étoit malade.*”

Sandius, who places the death of Capito in 1541, at the age of 60, has shortly described his valuable contributions to sacred literature. There is one omission, which may be supplied from a volume now before me, printed at Strasburg, and entitled *Novum Testamentum Græce. Argentorati, apud Wolfsum Cephalæum. Anno 1524.*

Cephalæus, in the usual manner of the earlier printers, has prefixed an address to the reader, in which he regrets the comparatively insignificant, if not irreligious, or merely secular interests to which the newly discovered *celestial* art had been generally applied. He then proposes the higher objects to which his press would be devoted, with the advice and assistance of his kinsman Capito.

As a first-fruit of their commendable purpose, Cephalæus proceeds to offer this NEW TESTAMENT, printed (very neatly) with a new Greek type; to be followed, if duly encouraged, by the Septuagint,* which was accordingly executed in 1526, in 3 vols. 12mo. Dr. Harwood in his

* “Ego, vero, candide lector, alienissimus esse cupiens ab istius modi perversissimo studio, novam, quam instituo, officinam quamque exteris potissimum linguis exornare animus est, *Fabritii Capitonis*, consanguinei meitum industria, tum consilio opitulantibus.

“Christo, imprimis, et salutis tue dica, ac perpetuo dicatam esse volo, inde tibi offerens Novum Testamentum, novo græco caractere, ut ipse certis, exornatum. Proinde, ubi conatum hunc nostrum, amice Lector, non omnino displicuisse tibi sensero, veteris quoque instrumenti volumina in suos digesta Tomos, iisdem typis transcripturum nos promitto.

“Vale. Argentorati, ex ædibus nostris, 1524, decimo. Kalendas Julias.”

"View of various Editions" (*Ed.* 2, p. 118), describes it as "rare and curious;" though neither on that occasion, nor when he mentions this New Testament (p. 120) in the same terms, does he discover any knowledge of the learned editor.

In the margin of my copy, at the place of 1 John v. 7, I find written, probably by a very early possessor, *hic desiderata quædam verba*; for Capito has the merit of rejecting the forgery, which Erasmus had restored two years before in his third edition. The editors of the "Improved Version" say, "This text concerning the heavenly witnesses, has been omitted as spurious, in many editions of the New Testament." They instance "the two first of Erasmus, Aldus, Colincæus, Zwinglius, and lately, Griesbach." They had probably never seen this edition of Strasburg.

If my memory serve me, I found the spurious text in an elegant edition which issued a few years since from the Glasgow press, though professing generally to follow Griesbach. Should I be correct, as you will easily ascertain, your Glasgow editor may have indulged a deference to ecclesiastical rather than to historic authority, such as Le Clerc discovered in 1703 in his note on the passage. That learned biblicist has accurately stated in a condensed form, the now well known and abundant evidence, which renders the authenticity of the disputed text almost, if not altogether, impossible. He, however, from such premises, unexpectedly arrives at the following conclusion; "Néanmoins, ce passage étant reçu dans nos Bibles, on n'a pas cru devoir l'omettre, comme *Luther* l'avoit fait, dans sa version."

I was the less surprised that Le Clerc had caught the mantle of Erasmus rather than of Luther, from having once observed in Locke's correspondence, that the learned *remonstrant* had entertained the project which his friend strangely encouraged, of becoming a beneficed clergyman of our *Calvinistic* State-church in its southern department; though at length deterred, not by the obligation to "subscribe slave," which deterred the generous youth of Milton, but by the difficulty to a foreigner in advanced life, of becoming an acceptable *English* preacher.

You have shown (p 347) from the affecting instance of Dr. M'Gill, that a beneficed clergyman in your northern division of the State-church, must alike be prepared to

"subscribe slave," especially by a seasonable recantation, should the inexorable *res augustæ domi* command the sacrifice. Thus, Dr. Price on "the Christian Doctrine, as held by Trinitarians and Calvinists," says (*Serm.* p. 52)—Prior to the *inquisition* of Glasgow and Ayr, which you describe in p. 348—"In Scotland, if I am not mistaken, the clergy are required, not only to declare their belief of this system, but that they will *constantly adhere to it*; that is, never grow wiser."

I am old enough to recollect the persecution of Dr. M'Gill, and the compassionate interest which his case excited among liberal-minded Christians. This appears in the "Memoirs of Priestley" (ii. 70). Writing to Mr. Lindsey from "Birmingham, July 6, 1790," he says, probably misinformed as to the Assembly's disposition—"It is much to be regretted that Dr. M'Gill was not more firm, especially if the General Assembly would have supported him." In the same page of the "Memoirs," we find that the exacted submission had not secured the hapless presbyter from the apprehension at least of farther annoyance. Writing to Mr. Turner, "May 12, 1791," Mr. Lindsey says, "I have had a few lines from Mr. Wardrop of Glasgow, who tells me that the second storm which threatened good Dr. M'Gill, is happily blown over."

There is a Church "built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." There is also a State-church sustained by an unholy alliance with "the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them." Of such a soi-disant Christian Church, displaying her allurements of rank and riches, in whatever proportions, and whether her waiting-servants appear in the scarlet mantle or in sleeves of lawn, in the presbyterian cloak or the episcopal rochet, it may be too truly said, as of "the strange woman" in the *Proverbs*, "she hath cast down many wounded; yea, many strong men have been slain by her."

CIVIS RUSTICUS.

Charles I. and Oliver Cromwell.

The following Lines were written by the late WILLIAM ROSCOE of Liverpool, on reading an encomium of Charles I. and a condemnation of Cromwell.

Hired slave of greatness—servile tool of state!

Thy bosom labouring with thy country's hate;

Whose tongue would lick the dust where tyrants trod,
 And whilst thou felt the power, would'st kiss the rod;
 The abject friend of Stuart's perjured line,
 And the mean advocate of right divine!
 Go, fawning wretch! from Albion's free-born land;
 Go, seek with trembling step some Southern strand,
 Where kneeling slaves around their Sovereign wait—
 His smile their transport, and his fury fate;
 Where freedom from the nerveless clime is flown,
 And the dear name of property unknown;
 Where love connubial dreads a tyrant's lust,
 And man, a reptile, grovels in the dust:—
 Then in thy native clime thy toils pursue,
 And bind with weightier chains the patient crew;
 Teach them that Heaven, in wrath to man, design'd
 That one should reign, the lord of all his kind;
 That God for him the feast of nature spread,
 And screen'd from justice his anointed head!
 Soon shall thy various merits stand confess'd,
 Thou the first minion of the tyrant's breast;
 Till one, more mean, if any such can be,
 Shall snatch the golden meed design'd for thee;
 And thou, dependent on thy Master's breath,
 Shall from the bow-string meet a silent death!
 O glorious day—O Heaven-directed hour!
 When injured justice crush'd the pride of power;
 Spurn'd the thin covering of exterior things,
 And dared to punish perjury in kings;
 Taught sceptred pride in nearer view to scan
 The rights of nature and the claims of man;
 Bade earth's proud tyrants dread their country's hate,
 And fix'd the base of England's future state!

Church Establishments.

CONSIDERABLE attention has, within the last few months, been given in Scotland to the important subject of Church Establishments. The propriety of a compulsory provision for the clergy, and the necessity of an authorised head in matters of religion, has been strenuously contended for in many a pamphlet; and, in default of argument, vituperation of dissent, and of dissenters, has abounded. The

dissenters have not been idle. The irrational and Anti-christian nature of all Church Establishments has been pointed out, and vigorous and well-directed assaults have been made on the Hierarchy. Societies in defence of and in opposition to the Church has been formed—Magazines for the advocacy and illustration of their respective views, established—petitions for and against the exercise of patronage in the appointment of ministers, presented to the Legislature. The true principles of Christian liberty have thereby been elicited, and much sound and Scriptural information been diffused. We rejoice in this. It gives a promise of better things to come. In a former Number, page 171, we pointed out the inconsistency of the “Voluntary Church Associations” in one of their rules, whilst we applauded the object of their union. They have done much, they will do more to bring about a reformation; and in that reformation, their rules and their creeds too will share. The clergy also of the Establishment are doing their best for its subversion. They have begun to persecute for stipend. Goods and chattels are not sufficient to exhaust the fury of their zeal—the imprisonment of those who will not pay an unjust demand, alone satiates their pious devotion to their Church. The clergy of Edinburgh will rue the day they availed themselves of an old law, to enforce claims to which the rising intelligence and spirit of the age will not long submit. Among other little publications which are continually issuing from the press, we have been much pleased with the following, which evinces a knowledge, not alone of the history of the Church, but also of the principles of Christian freedom, which augurs well for the future. We quarrel not with the title on account of its quaintness. That may excite attention to the truths of the paper, and if so, it will have fulfilled its mission.

“The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of the Kirk of Scotland.”

“For the first time during the revolution of more than a century, the people of Scotland have attained to a perfect knowledge of the important question of Church Patronage. For the last ten years, it has been urged upon their attention by means of the Anti-patronage Societies, which, although they at first appeared only as a little cloud, soon covered the whole land. The debates of the General Assembly, during its two last sessions, have contributed to give an impulse to the inquiry. The subject was taken

up by the whole country, and during the earlier part of this year, meetings to petition Parliament to repeal the obnoxious law, were held over the whole country.—The workings of this system have been thus revealed to the people in all the length and breadth of its impolicy. But it was reserved to honest Lord Althorp, to the Speaker, and to the conduct of the Members of the House of Commons, on Tuesday last, to show what were the primary principles of Church Patronage. And, after the appalling declaration made by the minister of the Crown respecting the extent of the royal prerogative, after the implicit submission shown by the representatives of the people to the decision of the Speaker, who dare deny that extraordinary powers are possessed by the Sovereign, or who will call in question the utter impotence of the people, or of their representatives in Parliament? It now were idle, it were worse than idle, in any of the act-of-parliament religionists in this country, to deny that the King is their supreme lord and head. If his power over the church is not to be questioned by the representatives of the people when in parliament, if his vested rights are not to be interfered with by the high courts of the nation, who among his subjects dare say unto him, what doest thou?

“Yet this declaration of the Minister, this submission of the House, will no doubt be followed by most important consequences. On the repeal of the Anti-christian law of Church Patronage, the people of Scotland have fully made up their minds. Petition on petition from the members of the Church, and numerous overtures from the Synods and Presbyteries, were heaped upon the table of the General Assembly. The petitioners implored their spiritual rulers to ease them of their heavy burden, but they turned a deaf ear to their supplications. The people then took counsel one with another, and the cry of ten times ten thousand sounded long and loud within the walls of St. Stephen's.

“After the result of Mr. Sinclair's motion, no man possessed of the smallest spark of reason will deny, that the people of Scotland have been treated as degraded slaves, chained down in the bonds of feudal servitude, and subject to the domination of an individual exercising supreme power in ecclesiastical matters; ruling in spiritual as well as in temporal affairs, head and lord of the church as well as head and lord of the state. This position has at times been held and maintained by the advocates of liberty in Scotland, but has been contested by churchmen and the clergy; and when the latter failed by sound argument to drive their opponents from the field, they scrupled not to employ the weapons of calumny and abuse, or to assail their opponents with the shafts of ridicule; and while it was contended, that in Scotland the King had no power over the Church, it being altogether independent of his authority, all arguments opposed to this were dexterously parried; all inquiry craftily stifled. The clergy well knew that they could only enjoy power with ease, by cherishing and upholding aristocratic institutions in the country; the power of the monarch and their own power, as lords of men's consciences, would be best secured by checking the progress of knowledge, by obstructing the path of free inquiry, and by preventing the light of truth, of rea-

son, and of revelation, from reaching the minds of the simple unsophisticated people of Scotland. The political storms and the ecclesiastical broils which had long agitated the country, and prevented in a great measure its inhabitants from applying their minds to the acquisition of knowledge, passed away with the 17th century; but before twelve years had elapsed, their political existence terminated as an independent nation; their parliament was bought up and incorporated with the legislature of England, and the power of Church Patronage was usurped by the Queen of their more powerful neighbours; resistance was vain; their complaints were unavailing. The clergy, obsequious to the will of the monarch, and of the feudal chieftains, now sought to establish themselves in the place and power held heretofore by the emigrant chieftains. To accomplish this darling object, it was necessary to effect the moral degradation of the people. They were already possessed of ample means in the authorised Confession and Catechisms of the Church. The attention of men was therefore more closely directed to points of speculative theology, their judgments were perplexed with abstruse questions of metaphysical nicety, and their understandings were prostrated with absurd and contradictory notions about free will and necessity. The beautifully simple scriptural doctrines of faith, grace, election, and perseverance, were wrapped up in an impenetrable veil of mystery; the pure and gladdening truths of revelation were shrouded from their mental vision by antiquated terms and barbarous phraseology, or covered over by the dogmas of the schoolmen and the traditions of the fathers. The noble, sublime, and animating virtues of charity, of love, and of universal benevolence, were denounced as wild, visionary, and licentious. To inculcate the precepts of the moral law, was held to be vain and unprofitable; to acquire a knowledge of the social and relative duties, was treated as illusory and deceitful, whilst the practice of every thing pure, noble, and lovely, was held as impious and unattainable, because opposed to their barbarous creed, and at variance with their dark and gloomy system of orthodoxy. Thus the eyes of the people became dim, so that they saw not; their ears were shut, so that they heard not; and their hearts became fat, so that they understood not;—following their blind guides, they plunged deeper and deeper into the mazes of error, and ever, as their vision of spiritual things grew dim, shadowy, and distorted, they embraced more greedily forbidden objects of sensual enjoyment.

“But amidst the downward career of the nation in profligacy, they still looked back with emotions of regret to the loss of those valuable privileges, which their fathers had purchased with much blood and treasure; and on that day, when another proof was to be given them of the absolute supremacy of the Sovereign,—when the population of the parish were to feel that those privileges which, as Christians, they were called to exercise by their Lord and Master, had, by wicked and cruel hands, been torn from them, and in place of having the man of their own choice placed over them in the name of their once crucified but now exalted Redeemer, the roll of the drum, the prancing of the war-horse, the tramp of

armed men, told them of the approach of some son of Mammon, sent forth to thrust his sickle into their harvests, the people have looked on with indignation and horror at the indignity thus put upon the Majesty of Heaven, and oft, as the long column of bristling bayonets glittered in the sunbeam, their hearts sunk within them, and their hands hung down feeble.

“Such a state of things was beyond all endurance, and before a quarter of a century had rolled on in its course, many of the most noble and virtuous in the land forsook its polluted temples, and, led on by the intrepid Erskine, separated from their brethren and their kindred, and erected a new altar to God in the land of their fathers, that, by the lifting up of their hands, they might show forth their Christian privileges; that, by the raising up of their voices, they might declare that liberty wherewith Christ had made his people free.

“But our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? were questions which might well have been put to the people of the National Church in latter days. The people saw not, they knew not their fallen state; they cared not how the pastor found an entrance within the fold, for the land was filled with drunkenness; the priest's lips had hid knowledge; the leader of the people caused them to err, and the people being led by them, all tables were filled with vomiting, so that there was no place clean. But the star of temperance, first lighted up in the churches of emancipated America, broke in through the thick clouds of darkness in which the land was enveloped, and roused them from their state of moral degradation; men awoke as from a horrid dream, and, shaking off the frightful incubus, spurned from them their treacherous guides, and boldly turned into the path of free inquiry. Each advancing step has opened up to them some new discovery of their former degradation, and having by vigorous exertion attained to a portion of their rights as members of the community, they now pant to enjoy their privileges as members of the church of Christ.

“Although for the present defeated in their attempt, they will yet again muster to the conflict, with accumulated numbers and increased energy, and, bearing down all opposition, shall sweep away this abomination from our high places. The clergy may from their pulpits vainly strive to stay the march of mind, or quench the light of revelation,—they may pour forth their anathemas against the virtuous of the land, but the sound of joy and gladness shall again be heard in our dwellings; our Sabbaths, now a weariness, shall then be called a delight, and men shall rejoice in the God of their salvation.

“A MEMBER OF THE NEW CHURCH.

“Greenock, 22d July, 1833.”

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## REVIEW.

*Memoirs of the late Rev. Thomas Belsham, &c. By John Williams.*

(Continued from page 391.)

FROM the 60th to the 78th page of the Memoirs, we find Mr. Belsham actively engaged in preaching, studying, and teaching. His own words will give the best idea of his progress:—

“I went to Daventry in August 1766, and remained there a student till 1771. In August 1770, upon Mr. Haliday’s leaving the Academy, I took the Greek class; and in August 1771, when Mr. Hill removed to London, I was appointed tutor in mathematics, logic, and metaphysics. I took pains, and was approved. I loved the pupils, and was beloved by them, and was upon good terms with Dr. Ashworth.”

Thus, in the 22d year of his age, Mr. Belsham occupied an important position in the Academy, had acquired no small celebrity as a preacher, as the frequency with which he was occupied in pulpit duties evinces, and gave proof of his future eminence.

The next eighty pages carry us through seven years of Mr. Belsham’s life—show us how assiduously he attended to the duties of his office in the Academy—present us with many instances of the chilling effects of Calvinism on his mind—mention many invitations received by him to take a congregational charge, among which were Callane, Leeds, Walthamstow, and Worcester,—and inform us, that at length, after having once declined the invitation from Worcester, but having received a second and more pressing one, he relinquished the tutorship at Daventry, which he had held more than eight years, having been presented with a handsome piece of plate by the Trustees, in acknowledgment of his important services; and entered upon his pastoral office at Worcester, in July, 1778.

Upon the Sermon which he preached at Worcester, in the April preceding his settlement, Mr. Belsham made the following remarks, under date March 15, 1814.

“This sermon is a curious document, as representing the state of mind with which the writer entered upon his office at Worcester, and his full and practical belief of those doctrines which now appear the principal corruptions of the Christian religion, and from the delusions of which it is wonderful that he should ever have been released.”

Mr. Belsham continued at Worcester three years,

during which period he received invitations from Ware, Carter-lane, and Daventry. The various correspondence respecting these invitations, and the particulars of his final acceptance of the office of principal tutor at Daventry, and his entrance upon that important situation, occupy the space in the Memoirs which extends from the 160th to the 236th page.

The 140 pages which follow, present us with most important and highly interesting information respecting the Daventry Academy and Mr. Belsham—his labours, his connexions, and his gradual change of religious sentiments. Among other particulars, we learn, that at one time he wished to remove the Academy to Northampton, and at another, to Warwick; that he was invited to take charge of the Warrington congregation, and join in a plan for the re-establishment of the Academy in that town; and that he fearlessly avowed the opinions which his anxious inquiries led him from time to time to adopt. And, under date Jan. 26, 1789, in the 376th page, we have an account of his resignation of his situation in Daventry Academy, followed by a reason for resigning, in his own words:—

“To-day I sent my letter of resignation to Mr. Paice. A very important step in life. I know not, nor can I guess the consequence. I have thought upon it, and prayed over it repeatedly; and I think I have done right.” “Sunday evening, Feb. 1:—The most important week of my life has now elapsed. Having become a Unitarian, I hope, after the most diligent, impartial investigation, I have thought it my duty to resign the Academy. I hope I have acted on right principles, and that I have not deserted my post before I was properly relieved. I have many very anxious thoughts, but I desire to refer all to God.”

To this is added a prayer which he composed on this occasion, which we should feel great pleasure in subjoining did our limits allow. It at once evinces his deep piety, his intense desire to do right, and his unquenchable thirst after pure Gospel truth. In his address to the students on closing the session, and resigning the divinity tutorship, he tells his late pupils that his change of sentiment had not taken place suddenly. “I even entered upon my inquiries,” says Mr. Belsham, “with a firm persuasion that I should be able with ease to baffle the arguments of Unitarianism by the declarations of Scripture. I flattered myself that I might be of some considerable use in checking the progress of a doctrine which I considered erroneous in its principles, and mischievous in its consequences.” “Nor was it without great reluctance and

many struggles, that I gave up the principles of that strictest sect of our religion in which I had been originally educated."

In the meantime, a new college was founded at Hackney, and Mr. Belsham invited to become its theological tutor. This invitation he accepted, and the next hundred pages of the memoirs are occupied with the details of the affairs and fluctuations of that institution, from its commencement in 1789, to its close in 1796. Two years before this last event, Mr. Belsham writes thus in his diary:

"I resigned Daventry Academy and congregation in August 1789, and my only expectation and wish, was to live in a small house in Birmingham, in the neighbourhood of Dr. Priestley. I was drawn involuntarily to take a department in the New College, and have remained here year after year, expecting each year to be the last."—"The convulsions which took place in the congregation upon the death of Dr. Price, and what I then esteemed the base desertion of my friends, threw me out of all prospect and expectation of a connection with this Society in any shape. Dr. Priestley's ministry has produced a great change in circumstances, and my election has been as honourable as my former rejection was mortifying. I was nominated one Lord's day, and the next, at a numerous meeting of the subscribers, summoned for the express purpose—I was chosen unanimously. Thus has Divine Providence cleared my way, and this encourages me to undertake the office, hoping that what God has called me out to, he will qualify me for." p. 456, 457.

And under the cheering influences of those ennobling views of God which Mr. Belsham now entertained, we find him expressing those better feelings of the heart which that "more excellent way" than Calvinism points out, enabled him to cherish. On his being chosen sole pastor of Gravel-Pit Hackney Congregation, he gives utterance to his emotions in these words:—

"I cannot but remark the different state of this congregation. In the year 1791, this society would not choose me assistant to Dr. Priestley—in 1802 I am elected sole minister. I trace the course of Divine Providence with admiration and gratitude. I desire to approve my fidelity and zeal in the sight of God. I trust he will endue me with vigour and fortitude to perform the duties, and to bear the burdens of the office with which I am now invested. The time of my continuance in it, my comfort and success, I resign wholly to his disposal." p. 518.

From this part of the Memoirs to about 40 pages onward, we have chiefly notices and letters on the deaths of Dr. Priestley, Mr. Kenrick, and other friends of Mr. Belsham; and correspondence on Mr. Belsham's removal

from Hackney to Essex-Street congregation, to succeed Dr. Disney, which took place in March 1805.

Under date January 1, 1807, Mr. Belsham thus expresses his gratitude to God:—

“The goodness of God to me in the past year has been very great, and the more to be admired and acknowledged, because it has been constant and uninterrupted. I have enjoyed health and ease, and all the blessings of life in great abundance. My relative comforts have been numerous, and the means of intellectual and moral improvement great. My public services have in general been very pleasant, and my acceptance beyond all expectation. It is often the subject of grateful admiration. I hardly know how to believe what I am continually witnessing.” p. 572.

And again, on occasion of his birth-day, he employs the following pious language:—

“Tuesday, April 20, 1808.—This day fifty-eight years I was a helpless infant; I am now entering upon my fifty-ninth year, an old man upon the verge of sixty. I can truly say, that I die daily! The thought of death is always uppermost in my mind; but not so as to distress me or to make me at all unhappy. It rather makes me indifferent to public amusements and any thing of that kind; also to the cultivation of society of rank and fashion, of which I was once eager. And it excites me to diligence in the work I have to do, as the time is short.” p. 580.

A few pages onward, Mr. Belsham assigns the reasons of his being happier now than formerly:—

“One fact is remarkable, I find myself happier in the present stage of my existence (his sixtieth year) than in that which preceded it. Thanks be to the abundant, unmerited, unchangeable goodness of God. One great cause of present satisfaction is, that I see men and things in what appears to me to be their true light. The first thirty years of life was a kind of dream. Nothing appeared in its due proportion; every object was magnified and in a considerable degree distorted. I had notions much too exalted of rank, of opulence, of learning; and my religious views were irrational and false in the extreme, and a source of unspeakable pain and misery, especially during my course of studies at the Academy. They completely destroyed the comfort of my life, and made the naturally delightful season of youth an insupportable burden.” p. 586.

The tenor of his mind, the breathings of his heart, the aspirations of his soul, were all thus beneficially changed, and gloriously elevated by those heavenly, holy views of Christ, and God, and man, and futurity, which he had gratefully taken in exchange, for the mind-enslaving, heart-withering, vain philosophy with which he had been saturated in the immolating, iron, merciless school of Calvin. He had disowned the man of Geneva, and put himself wholly under the guidance of the man of Nazar-

eth; and the rest to his soul, experienced in his emancipated state, was a theme for daily and hourly delightful converse, a subject for constant thrilling contemplation, and the cause of ever-growing inward satisfaction, and ever-swelling gratitude to God.

(To be concluded in our next.)

*The Assurance of Faith; or Calvinism identified with Universalism. By Rev. David Thom. Two Vols. London; Simpkin & Marshall.*

IF originality of thought, facility of expression, firmness of purpose, and benevolence of design, may be ranked among things that are valuable, then these volumes must be allowed to be at least of some worth. The author is endowed with no common mind, and has recourse to no every-day methods of displaying its powers. His *forte* is encountering difficulties, and his delight is solving paradoxes. Theological Alps are to him mere molehills, to be stepped over with ease, or scattered with pleasure. And while he, with small effort, levels all obstacles that stand between himself and the goal at which he aims; he, with little difficulty, casts up many mighty barriers between himself and his pursuers.

The author's views may be gathered from the following abstract:—God has chosen a certain number to enjoy eternal life; and yet Christ died for all, and ultimately saves all. The wicked shall be eternally punished, and yet every child of Adam shall be brought to happiness. Eternal life through Christ is bestowed on and enjoyed by the believer NOW, without any condition; and the chosen or elect ones, are each infallibly certain that God's love is towards himself personally. This is the assurance of faith. Belief of the truth, is, in them that possess it, the principle of immortality. The human soul is mortal, and both soul and body will be destroyed at death, that is changed, but not annihilated. But the spirit is distinct from the soul, because the soul or mind is natural, and the spirit supernatural, or divine, or of the nature of God, and therefore immortal. Believers have this spirit, and therefore are spiritual and immortal; but unbelievers have it not, and therefore are natural and mortal. The believer or the elect shall live and reign with Christ in his kingdom, and help to subdue the earth. At the con-

summation of all things, there shall be a resurrection to life and happiness of the unbelievers or non-elect; the principle of immortality shall then for the first time be communicated to them, their human nature shall then be everlastingly destroyed, and, consequently, everlastingly punished, and their divine nature shall enjoy endless happiness. Thus God punishes or torments sinful creatures, but it is by loading them with benefits.

That there is at least as much benevolence as fancy in this system, even its opponents must in fairness allow. And if those opponents were phrenologists, they would probably say that Mr. Thom must have not only the organs of benevolence, ideality, and wonder large; but also veneration, firmness, self-esteem, and combativeness. They would likely argue, that his benevolence is displayed, and his ideality and wonder evinced, in his scheme for bringing all to happiness at last; and that his veneration is manifested in his high-toned piety; his firmness, in his sturdy independence; his self-esteem, in his good natured dogmatism, in his constant use of the first personal pronoun singular, and in his incessant repetition of the statement that he is one of the elect; and his combativeness, in his keen opposition to every religious system whatever, but the one of his own devising.

That Christ is the effect and not the cause of God's love; that God is love; that eternal life is the gift of God; that Christ died for all; and that all God's rational creatures will finally be happy, we as firmly and as gratefully believe as Mr. Thom does. But we confess, that we do not, even after a tolerably close attention to Mr. Thom's arguments, see, comprehend, or believe that he has identified Calvinism with Universalism. What is Calvinism? The system of John Calvin. Had Calvin then any such views as those of Mr. Thom? Did he think all will be happy? No, no; and that Mr. Thom's views are not Calvinism, John Calvin would have given Mr. Thom a red-hot proof, if Mr. Thom and his books had been at Geneva when Calvin was burning Servetus. We would not be misunderstood. We do not think Mr. Thom's views less true, because we deem them *in toto* Anti-Calvinistic. Neither do we like them the less, because they aim at the demolition of John Bunyan's Doubting Castle, and the destruction of Giant Despair. We are as much opposed to the common methods of addressing religious



arguments to the fears and superstitions of men, as Mr. Thom can be. We are as strenuous advocates as he, for firm, unwavering confidence in God; and we are persuaded that there are persons not a few among those that reject, as anti-scriptural, the notion of Mr. Thom, about the supreme Deity of Jesus; who enjoy *now*, as fully as Mr. Thom does, the life and immortality of the Gospel, and are as certain *now* of God's love personally towards themselves, and that they shall hereafter enjoy endless happiness. And this shows the absurdity of requiring a belief of all the fanciful notions which Mr. Thom has unnecessarily mixed up with the grand, soul-elevating, heavenly doctrines, that God is love, is void of revenge, is possessed of all power, is unerring in wisdom, has never been and never will be thwarted or disappointed in his designs, and will bring every individual of the human race, to know and love and enjoy him for ever.

But as Mr. Thom has shown, by quotations from Hervey, Boston, Scott, Owen, the Assembly's Catechism, the Confession of Faith, and from Calvin himself, that "Calvinism, as regards eternal life, is inconsistent with itself," we cannot but think Mr. Thom inconsistent with himself in attempting to identify Calvinism with Universalism. Our ears would perceive as much euphony in the phrases, "vice identified with virtue," "wrong identified with right," "darkness identified with light." No, no, it will not do. Mr. Thom had better renounce Calvin, and his jargon, and his inconsistencies, and his heart-withering doctrines altogether, instead of labouring to identify them with any thing good, and follow Christ alone. Were he to do this, and give the world another work on his system, containing much less of metaphysics, much less of mere fancy, much less of repetition, and much less about self, than the present volumes contain,—we should unquestionably be put in possession of a book of about half the size of one of those now before us, of much greater value, and far more likely to be read, to be understood, and to do good. Believing Mr. Thom to be an honest, fearless inquirer, a warm-hearted pious man, we can truly say, that in all his benevolent exertions to spread truth, virtue, and happiness, we most heartily wish him God speed.

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*Poor Laws and Paupers Illustrated, No. I. The Parish;  
a Tale by Harriet Martineau. C. Fox; London.*

MISS Martineau is one of the most benevolent and clear-sighted of her species; yet with all her rare talents and still rarer sagacity, she is a zealot, we think, upon one or two subjects, and these of the deepest importance to human happiness. In the first place, she is an alarmist on the subject of population, with a reference to subsistence. She appears to live in daily horror of there being more mouths than food to put into them—a consummation which the bygone fortunes of our race, even under the most clumsy and vicious constructions of the social system, do not warrant us in believing *very probable*. Next, she seems to us to behold with the jaundiced eyes of a partizan, the principle of a public or legal provision for the poor—that is, that the poor *shall not starve if they are willing to work*. We see nothing so very alarming to society in this simple proposition; and yet a very distinct enmity to it, forms a leading feature in the character and writings of this enlightened and persevering, but we think on this topic, misjudging friend of her species. There is no doubt of the principle being liable to abuse; and it is the infinite abuse which has been accumulated upon its simple provisions, that has brought all this obloquy upon a very clear definition of a great social right.

We think Miss Martineau, like many other well-meaning persons, has been accustomed to look at this subject, through the highly coloured medium of the multiplied abuses which have grown out of the English system of poor laws, and which have certainly communicated a most repulsive aspect to a most humane and just institution.

This new work of our authoress, comes out under very suspicious patronage—that of the Society for Diffusing Useful Knowledge; certainly one of the most distinguished failures in effecting a professed object, which has ever disappointed human hope. We do not think the public will relish this volume any better for being ushered into the world by a society of lords and gentlemen, who have talked very loftily and performed very meanly, whose deeds are still in an inverse ratio to their pretensions, and who have shown a singular facility in the abuse of very great capacities for public instruction.

The object of Miss Martineau, is to illustrate the work-

ing of the *present system* of Poor Laws in England; and in this, with her unrivalled power of perception and description, she will doubtless fully succeed. What we complain of, is the tendency of the writer to connect the abuses she points out so forcibly, with the true and just principles of a well-regulated legal provision for the poor. The first Chapter, entitled "Pay-day at Therpe," lets us at once into this mystery of iniquity, the manifold and gross abuses of the present system of the poor laws in England. We are introduced to a group, which, we thank Heaven, cannot be paralleled in Scotland. We have an idiotical squire, very well meaning, and very fat-headed—an overseer, sharp as flint and as full of feeling—and a sensible clear-headed farmer Goldby, who sees the evils of the system of abuse which prevails, and whose fate it is to be one of its first victims. After the exhibition, during the conversation of these worthy persons; of many obvious and gross abuses in the administration of provision for the unemployed poor, we are treated to the following—intended, we presume, as the acme of the whole—the squire's own footman, *in receipt of full wages from him, applies for a maintenance for his wife and two children, which is allowed!*

"Well, Wood, so you show yourself again; why could not you come while your master was here?"

"I had to hold his horse, sir; he has but just mounted. My wife has two children, you remember, sir."

"I have her down. Pray, Wood, does your master know of your taking parish pay? You who wear his livery, and not only wait at his table, but eat your fill of what is carried from it."

"My master has nothing to do with my wife's concerns, and it is for her that I take pay. Not so much as a shilling goes into my own pocket."

"Why, no; I don't see how you would manage to spend it, your wages being a pretty income of themselves, even if you had to find either clothing or food, both of which are provided for you. I shall spare your wife nothing till she wants it more; so, clear the way, if you please."

"Wood beckoned to the vestry-clerk, who had entered the room after a short conference with the squire, as he mounted. Woolerton had much to say in favour of Wood's claim, and advised a reference to the squire, in case of any doubt. Donkin always dreaded a summons to the squire's (at the distance of nearly five miles), as more expensive than giving relief. He therefore allowed Wood's claim for this week, and proposed to Goldby, in a whisper, that the first of them who saw the squire should endeavour to obtain his assent to the wife of a livery-servant being an improper object for parish relief."

A system which could tolerate such an infamous usurpation upon the rights of the industrious and unfortunate, must have been corrupt to the core; and it is through the medium of such abuses, and not of its fair and honest working, that it has lately been fashionable to look at this subject. But the true remedy surely would be, not to uproot the institution, but correct its abuses. *That* the administrators have in their own power. It is simply, to return to the first principles of a poor law, and refuse to aid proprietors by paying part of the wages of their able-bodied labourers out of those funds, which should ever have been held sacred to the assistance of the necessitous.

A certain Widow Brand had been upon the pauper list of Thorpe, but being desirous to mend her condition, she sets up a beer-shop in the village, amid the croakings of the squire and others, who prophesy dismal things of this essay of hers to be independent of parish aid. The upshot of the adventure is certainly lamentable enough for Widow Brand's reputation and comfort; but we do not think this part of the tale very probable, and suspect the author's prejudices against beer-shops, have coloured the picture too highly. Miss Martineau must remember, the majority of the poor are neither so enlightened or so self-denying as she finds it easy to be. What then, they must have their enjoyments, coarse and unintellectual though they be. The refined table of a Lord Chancellor, may exhibit as much of vice, though better disguised, as any beer-shop in England. Let us not be too severe upon the propensities of the poor to a little enjoyment—their cup of pleasure is seldom filled to the brim—hard labour with little hope, craves some toleration at our hands—“because we are virtuous, shall there be no more cakes or ale?”

We are, in the course of the tale, introduced to a great variety of characters, far too numerous to particularise—all drawn to the life. The fortunes of these various characters, are, of course, made subservient to the object of the work—the illustration of the pauper system. There is a virtuous and independent-minded labourer, one Ashly, whose struggles, and we rejoice to find them successful, to keep out of the workhouse, are narrated with touching effect, and inspire us with the most profound respect for such honourable poverty. His friend Good-

man is of the same high stamp, but he sinks under the evil system, and is sucked into the gulf of parish pauperism. We have also a pragmatist fellow of a village apothecary—a long-winded orator, who declaims in the beer-shop against the vices of the rich and the hardships of the poor; and whose orations, it is shrewdly intimated, led the way to some stack-burnings, as well as a little poaching. Now, we think a good deal of this is overcharged—coloured beyond nature, in order to have a fling at that forum of village eloquence, the beer-shop; and there is a lurking sneer or two besides, at the political discussions of these horny-fisted rustics, which might have been spared. We have said, there is fire-raising too in the tale, to fill up the measure of village horrors. The stack-yard of farmer Goldby is burned, in revenge, it is understood, of his firm and enlightened opposition to the overgrowing abuses of the system, fostered by the booby squire we have already mentioned, and an interested vestry-clerk, a shopkeeper in the village. Poor Goldby is ruined; the scene of his last disaster, we extract for the gratification of our readers—being one of the finest pictures in the volume, and every object in it brought out with that force and clearness, characteristic of this powerful writer.

They (the flames) spread up and down and on each side, and ran along the ridge and eaves of the stack as if a rocket had skimmed them; and the yellow glare instantaneously brought into strong apparition the thatched cottage of Goodman, close at hand; the gleaming windows of Ashly's dwelling, a little further retired; the gnarled roots of the ancient trees jutting over the sullen pond; and the diversified paling which surrounded the stack-yard. At a considerable distance, the shadowy house, mantled with its vines and trained pear-trees, began to appear as the flames shot up, and cast their radiance over the low buildings which intervened. In these buildings, the cattle began to stir. The pigeons came out upon the roofs, and flapped their wings. A bat, more blinded than Ruth herself by the glaring picture which had suddenly come out of the blank darkness, flew low, and blundered against her face. Half-stunned, she rushed on at no very steady pace; and at the first corner where she turned into comparative darkness, she ran up against a man. He was completely dressed, and had evidently come forth that very moment from a shed; which circumstances left no doubt in Ruth's mind of his being the incendiary. In a passion exalted by her previous fear, she seized him by the collar, and swayed him to and fro with no contemptible force, while she reproached him with all the vehemence of a woman's anger, for having ruined her master, and wishing to burn him and his family in their beds. Halliday—for it was he—

threw her off as soon as he could recover himself from the sudden attack, and ran towards the house, shouting "fire" with all his might. Before he could be persuaded to cease clattering at the doors and windows with his stick, and screaming the names of the master and mistress, the ready Mrs. Goldby was half-dressed, and the farm-servants came pouring out, to get as near the fire as they could without being burned, and to gaze upon it with eyes and mouths expanded at the utmost width practicable without dislocation. There were two ponds gleaming within a few yards; and a range of buckets had hung before the men's eyes during every meal that they had taken in the farmer's kitchen since they entered his service; yet no one did any thing effectual towards putting out the flames. All ran hither and thither, jostling and overthrowing one another. Some remarked how the fire ran along the dry litter on the ground from one stack to another, like water in trenches; and others followed with their eyes the wisps of burning straw which were carried up by the wind, and fell thick upon the thatched roof of Goodman's cottage, and upon the surface of the pool which slept at the foot of the old trees. These last went out as they touched the water. It would have been well if the former had been equally harmless: but the thatch was kindled before a bucketful of water had been procured; and almost before the labourer's winking and scared children could be brought out, the little dwelling was wrapt in flame.

Ashly was absent on guard as well as the farmer; so that the whole direction of affairs seemed for the moment to rest on Goodman. When he had lodged his wife and infants under Ashly's roof, and assured Susan, that, standing to leeward, it was in no danger from the fire, unless the wind should change, he appeared, with a face deadly pale, but a composed manner and steady voice, to do what could be done in so apparently desperate a case.

It was in vain to make any effort. The farm-servants were bewildered and helpless;—not made so by the surprise alone, but by the conduct of the people who came thronging from the village, some of whom were only in too directly opposite a state. There were many present who showed neither alarm, nor indignation, nor sorrow. They looked on at their ease, talking about the many reasons which might account for this calamity, and speculating upon whether the injury was aimed at the farmer or the landlord. One offence after another was brought up, which Goldby had committed against the interests or the dignity of the poor of his parish, of so much of whose maintenance he had borne the burden so long. In vain did Goodman look round for more than one or two who were willing to help the farmer, instead of insulting his misfortunes. There were but very few such friends present. The reason of this was, not that Goldby had scarcely any friends, but that all the more respectable part of the parishioners were engaged at the fire at Bingham's. If they had known as well as some of their neighbours, that there would be two fires this night, they would probably have divided their numbers, and afforded Goldby his proportion of assistance.

## THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, AUGUST 31, 1833.

*Opening of a place for Unitarian Worship at Middlesbro'.*—Middlesbro' is a small town which has been built within the last three years, at the termination of the Darlington rail-way, on the right bank of the river Tees, about four miles below Stockton. It is a principal shipping port for the coal district connected with that rail-way; and notwithstanding its recent origin, it already contains above 700 permanent inhabitants, while its population is frequently raised to above 1000, by the sailors and other parties connected with the vessels frequenting it. Until lately, no suitable place for public worship and religious instruction had been provided by any party at this little town; and the Unitarians of Stockton knowing that some zealous advocates of their sentiments were to be found among its inhabitants, have been induced to supply this important desideratum. For this purpose, they have erected a set of small cottages, with a large room above them, which may serve for a place of worship and school-room;—the rent at which the lower tenements will let, being such as will materially lessen the permanent expense that would otherwise have been incurred. The upper room being neatly fitted up with forms, was opened as a place of public worship, on Sunday, June 30, by William Duffield the Unitarian minister at Stockton. The services were in the afternoon and evening, and on each occasion there was an attentive congregation of above 150 persons. In the afternoon, Mr. D. preached from 2 Cor. iv. 6, and attempted to show how ample a supply of spiritual knowledge, of holy influences, and of religious hopes, is furnished in the Gospel;—proving that Christianity, as held by the Unitarians, is fitted to the intellectual and moral nature of man, and that it affords to him every religious instruction and assistance he requires in this state of being, in addition to such as he may derive from the teachings of nature. The evening discourse was from Isa. xl. 31, and in it the preacher explained the true nature of what are usually called the instrumental duties of religion, dwelling especially on the importance of public worship, as an essential means of preserving the power of religion over the private character—of securing the spiritual welfare of families—and of promoting the moral improvement of society at large.

The sum of £6 : 4 : 1, was collected at these services, toward defraying the expense of erecting and fitting up the meeting-house.\* Since the opening, a Sunday-school has been established,

\* In reference to this subject, it is proper to observe, that £56 had been previously raised for these purposes at Stockton and Middlesbro', in private subscriptions. A further sum of £21 has been subscribed at York, Hull, and by a friend from London: making in all, £88 : 4 : 1 already received. It is hoped, that the friends of rational Christianity and religious education in general, will afford additional assistance to an undertaking, which has been so spiritedly supported in the immediate neighbourhood.

and public worship has been conducted on the Sunday mornings, by a member of the congregation, and in the evenings by the Unitarian minister of Stockton. We are happy to state, that these exertions have been attended with the most pleasing results, and that there is every reason to hope that this undertaking will be crowned with complete success, in reference both to the school and also to the congregation. It may be proper to add, that the Wesleyan Methodists, who for some time had held their meetings in a private house, have, since the Unitarians commenced their labours, also erected a meeting-house, which was opened on Sunday, July 21, so that Middlesbro' is now provided with two places of public worship. May they be the means of increasing a sense of religious duty, and of diffusing the blessings of religious education.

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THE Manchester Unitarian Village Missionary Society is pursuing its enlightened and benevolent objects with steadiness and perseverance. From its published Report, we learn that at Astley and Swinton, both the schools and the public worship have been well attended throughout the year. Our friends at Padiham have adopted the Scottish plan of receiving every Sunday the voluntary contributions of those who attend. That plan has been successful; and we are persuaded, could it be generally introduced into our congregations in England, it would do much for the support and the increase of our common faith. The exertions of the Missionary Society in Derbyshire have been very useful. The following instance is highly interesting: "Flagg is a small village containing about 500 inhabitants. It contains no place of worship, and no Sunday-school. The inhabitants propose to erect a building capable of containing 150 persons, to be devoted to the worship of the Father of Jesus, as the only God, and to the instruction of children in a Sunday-school. They have no doubt, that when the building is erected, there will be a good congregation, and no lack of either Sunday scholars or teachers. The expense of the building, in addition to the free labour which will be given by the farmers, is estimated at from £60 to £70. The inhabitants request assistance to the amount of £30, and engage to furnish in addition whatever may be necessary to the completion of the building. This they have in public meeting agreed to raise, by a voluntary rate upon themselves." The Committee unanimously voted the £30. The circulation of tracts and the volumes in the different libraries, have been extensive.

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THE Third Anniversary of the Scottish Unitarian Christian Association, will be held in Glasgow, on Sunday and Monday the 29th and 30th September. There will be three religious services on Sunday; and the subscribers and friends will meet on Monday afternoon, at six o'clock, at a social entertainment. The Rev. John Scott Porter of Belfast, and the Rev. Dr. Drummond of Dublin, are expected to preach at this anniversary.



THE Rev. Archibald Macdonald of Greenock, has accepted the invitation of the Unitarian Congregation at Royston, Hertfordshire, to become their pastor; and intends entering on the duties of his office, on the first Sunday of November.

WE are happy to learn, that Dr. Bowring has in the press, the two first volumes of Jeremy Bentham's posthumous works. The subject of these volumes is Deontology, or the Science of Morality; in which the harmony and coincidence of Duty and Self-interest—Virtue and Felicity—Prudence and Benevolence, are explained and exemplified. The first volume will contain the *theory* of the Social Science, and the second volume the *practical* part.

WE remember well, that when the Liverpool Unitarian Tract Society was formed, an objection was made by one individual to becoming a subscriber, that these little tracts were like musquitos, buzzing and stinging; but if one large book could be written which would settle the controversy, he would willingly contribute his aid. Such a book our respected friend, the Rev. Francis Knowles of Park-Lane, Lancashire, has long been engaged in preparing. He has lately issued a Prospectus respecting it. He proposes to publish, by subscription, in three volumes 12mo. (probable price 3s. 6d. per volume) "The Balance of Scriptural Evidence on Unitarianism and Trinitarianism, with the explanations and arguments usually advanced in support of the two systems. The work contains three parts, and each part will form a volume. Part I. On the Divine Being.—Part II. On Jesus Christ.—Part III. On the Holy Spirit. Each Part embraces the whole of the evidence which is contained in the New Testament, on that particular branch of the subject to which it refers; and has its appropriate titles running along the heads of the pages, with the names of the various books of the Christian Scriptures. The left hand page is appropriated to Trinitarian evidence, and the right hand page to Unitarian evidence; and in proportion as one side has a preponderance of evidence, the other side will appear blank. The work, therefore, will present Trinitarians and Unitarians in contrast, under the leading doctrine of their respective systems, and appealing to the Scriptures in their support."

Deeming the work to be an important one, knowing the labour which has been employed upon it, and persuaded that it will be faithfully executed, we strongly recommend it to our readers, and shall be glad to receive the names of subscribers.

SINCE the article on Church Establishments was printed, Mr. Tait, the proprietor of the Edinburgh Magazine, has been put in jail, for refusing to pay the Annuity Tax to the Edinburgh Clergy. He has addressed the following letter to his persecutors:—

"To the Reverend Messrs. G. H. Baird, James Marshall, Andrew Brown, Robert Gordon, John Hunter, Alexander Brunton, John Lee, John Inglis, R. Anderson, Daniel Wilkie, David Ritchie, A. Grant, James Martin, Henry Grey, William Muir,

Thomas Macknight, and John Bruce, Clergymen of the Established Church in Edinburgh.

“REV. GENTLEMEN,

“Since you have thought fit to lay me in jail for refusing to pay an assessment for your support, I consider it due to myself, and to the cause of truth, that I should publicly vindicate my own conduct. It is possible that some good men, under the influence of prejudice and partial views, may consider that I have acted unjustifiably, and contrary to the dictates of religion. I wish to stand well with these men; and if I do not convince them, I hope at least to mitigate the severity of their censures, and to show, that, in this contest, I am not the only offending party.

“I do not pretend to discuss theology with you; but I know that many of the wisest and the best of men, have been of opinion that the religion of Jesus Christ can legitimately rest for its support only on the conviction of its professors; and that its great Founder has proscribed the use of all carnal weapons and worldly policy in the defence and propagation of the Gospel.

“I have looked through the whole of the New Testament, and cannot find the shadow of an authority for laying an assessment on any town, city, or country, for the support of its ministers.

“I read (John xviii. 36) that Jesus Christ, in answer to Pilate’s inquiries, told him, ‘My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight.’

“I read that when the Apostle Paul was desirous that the Corinthians should contribute for Christian purposes, in 2d Cor. 9th chap. which you may turn to at your leisure, he used various and powerful arguments to induce them to contribute liberally; and in the beginning of the next chapter he says, “Now, I Paul, myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ: the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God.” But it is needless to multiply quotations. I only ask you, if you can conscientiously believe that it is the same religion that breathes in these passages, and which instigated you to send your sheriff-officers to drag me to jail, without permitting me to get to my own shop to make necessary arrangements.

“The true Christian religion is founded on the Apostles and Prophets; Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; but what have you proved the religion of the Establishment to be founded on? The bars, and bolts, and stigma of a jail! Take away the powerful support of the jailors; and where is the Kirk of Scotland?

“Alas for Christianity, Reverend Sirs, if it had only the shining light of your conduct to manifest it.

“I do not deny that you have a legal enactment for what you are now perpetrating against the religion you profess; but I maintain that that law is not only essentially unjust, but surreptitiously obtained. It is essentially unjust, inasmuch as it compels men who do not approve of the principles of a sect, to contribute to its support—it was surreptitiously obtained, as it was passed through Parliament without giving the parties interested the legal

intimation; and the enactment was procured by the magistracy really for other purposes.

“ But I am told, that however the law was obtained, it is law, and must be obeyed. I acknowledge that the laws, while in force, ought to be obeyed; but I likewise maintain, that bad laws ought to be repealed. Now, my object in refusing payment of the assessment for your stipends, it is to show to the country and to yourselves, the utter abomination of this law, and the necessity for some alteration; and, in short, that no compulsory assessment, for the support of the Gospel, can be resorted to, without depending on the aid of the jailor. I have been the more induced to take this step, from perceiving that your reverend body has petitioned Parliament against any alteration of this annuity tax. You cling to the filthy lucre, with whatever injustice and heart-burnings it might be attended. I see that nothing but decided steps on the part of the payers will procure an equitable adjustment on the part of the payers; and in the hope that I may be in some small measure instrumental in bringing about a consummation so devoutly to be wished, I have submitted to no small inconvenience and odium.

“ Those who resist payment of this unjust, unchristian, and obnoxious tax, have been branded as doing injury to religion; but I hope the public will perceive that there are two parties in this game, and that if you, Gentlemen, had been as anxious to promote the cause of Christianity, as to increase the income of your own order, you would have imitated the conduct of the Apostles, and of the Ministers of several denominations of Christians. Had you said, by law we are entitled to the six per cent. annuity, but rather than injure the cause of the religion we profess, and be charged with oppression and violence, we shall submit to be defrauded of part of our rights—in all probability, the deficiency would have been more than made up by your congregations; but even if the opposition had diminished your incomes by £400 or so, would you sell your Master for 100 pieces of gold?

“ By your violent and harsh assertion of your rights, you have not perhaps injured Christianity, but you have shaken the Kirk. It is not likely that the country will long submit to the burden of a jail-supported Church. The inhabitants of Edinburgh have already resolved that this annuity tax shall be abolished: and if I can be, in any humble degree, assistant in relieving them from its oppression, I shall consider myself fully rewarded for all I have suffered at your hands.—I am, Rev. Sirs, with profound respect,  
your humble and submissive prisoner,

WILLIAM TAIT.

Calton Jail, 12th August, 1833.

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Our friends in various parts of England, are respectfully informed, that their communications for this Magazine, if sent to the care of MR. HUNTER, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, LONDON, *previously to the last day of every Month*, will reach the Editor in a few days afterwards.

## CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

No. 86.

OCTOBER, 1833.

Vol. VII.

*To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.*

SIR,—I beg leave to thank you for the notice you have taken of my pamphlet, addressed to the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, in your periodical for February last. Your review of that little work appears to be generally written in a candid and liberal spirit, although perhaps occasionally tinged with a grain of *party feeling*. But we do not exactly agree in some points contained in the introductory portion thereof; nor can I, with my present views of the Scriptural account of the *divine generation* of the SON of GOD, Jesus the Christ, in conjunction with his true, proper, and essential humanity, by any means surrender the “phrases” you appear to impugn. Your words are,—“Possibly, too, he will, on further examination and reflection, find such phrases as ‘the Divine filiation of the LOGOS, as the MONOGENES of the Father,’ and ‘the generically spiritual identity of the Son of God with the offspring of Adam and Eve, as, under God, the true and proper Father of all human spirits,’ are as mystified and as totally inapplicable to the promotion of sound morality, true piety, and spiritual devotion, as are those anti-scriptural dogmas which he so dexterously exposes and so justly condemns.”

In this dereliction of principle, which you have so kindly prescribed for me, I can by no means acquiesce, and that for very sound and cogent reasons; for, as I am in the habit of believing my Bible, and forming my theological principles upon its testimony, interpreted by reason, and illustrated by philosophy, I find the first set of “phrases” which you condemn, so clearly and *literally* contained in the Scriptures, *viz.* in John i. 14, and v. 26.—viii. 42, and x. 30, 36—that I must be a *barefaced infidel* in my own estimation, if I did not fully and firmly believe them. And although the “mystification” of the *fact* there recorded, like the union of the human soul with the body, and the simultaneous and coincident propagation of both, may place the *modus operandi* of its accomplishment beyond the reach of my comprehension,

yet this is no argument against its truth, or its connection with "morality, piety, and devotion," so long as it is written, that "it is life eternal to know the only true God and" *his Son* "Jesus Christ, whom he hath sanctified and sent into the world to be the Saviour of men." (John x. 36, xvii. 3; 1 John iv. 14.) Surely, Sir, there is nothing *irrational, immoral, impious, or anti-devotional*, in *believing God's own declaration*, that he both possessed and has exerted a power similar to what he has given to man, *viz.* that of begetting a Son in his own likeness, who is "the bright effulgence of his glory, and the impressed image of his hypostasis." (Colos. i. 15; Heb. i. 3.) If to believe this be superstition and heresy, I glory in being such a superstitious heretic as to both believe and maintain the fact, upon the express testimony of God himself. With respect to the second class of "phrases," which here come under your censure, I am equally satisfied of their truth and consistency with the plan of human redemption, upon soundly Scriptural and rational grounds; nor am I aware of any other mode by which "the Son of God" could possess that Scriptural identity with the human family, which was necessary, not only to constitute him a true and proper man, seeing he had *no immediate human Father*, but also the federal representative of that family, and the sacrificial victim of their redemption. And this I find fully revealed and amply confirmed in the Scriptures of truth, which declare, first, that "both he that sanctifieth" (*viz.* Christ; see Heb. xiii. 12) "and they who are sanctified" (*viz.* his "purchased people;" see *the true translation* of Ephes. i. 14) "are all of one" (*viz.* all the offspring of one common Father, and partakers of one common nature, John xx. 17). And second: That notwithstanding this, and by virtue of his *primogeniture* (Colos. i. 15; Rom. viii. 28, 29; Rev. iii. 14), he must in all things have the pre-eminence (Colos. i. 18) above them all, as well as above the angelic powers (Heb. i. 4, 6). Now as man is the offspring of God (Acts xvii. 28), so Christ is declared to be the *generative* as well as the *federative* head of the human family (1 Cor. xi. 3); and, as such, the first link of the golden chain by which we sprang from God, and through whom we must also return to God, for "no man cometh to the Father but by the Son."

The propagation of human souls or spirits, I presume

to be a fact as certain and as clearly proved as that of bodies, for we have precisely the same evidence in support of the one as of the other; *viz.* that of our senses and of our reason, confirmed by the express testimony of Scripture, *viz.* Gen. v. 3, xlii. 26. Moreover, the generation of mankind is, in the *genealogy* of the *supposed* human father of Christ, traced up by St. Luke to God (Chap. iii. 38). But God being a Spirit, this proves that *He* was the Father of the human soul, as indeed he is expressly said to be in Hebrews xii. 9. But in John i. 1, 3, and Heb. i. 2, we are informed that the Logos, *i. e.* Christ the Son of God, who was "with God" at the creation of all things, was also the agent and medium by and through whom the universe and all things therein were produced. And he is specially and emphatically declared to be the head or fountain of the human race, even as God is his head and the fountain from which he sprang, in the passage above quoted, *viz.* 1 Cor. xi. 3, where St. Paul says—"But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God." That this headship in each case is founded in *generative pater-nity*, is evident, because as God is the Father of Christ, so the man is the father of the woman; and as the same causes and effects constitute the basis of each link in the chain, so it is clear that the headship here ascribed to Christ above "every man," including, of course, all his own ancestors "according to the flesh" (See Matt. xxii. 45; Rom. i. 3; John x. 58; Rev. xxii. 16), is *paternal*; and if paternal, it must be generative; and if generative, it could only be *spiritually* so, for, *κατα σαρκά*, David and the other Patriarchs were his ancestors; but in the spirit he is "David's Lord," and the *root* from which the soul of that Patriarch sprung. (See Matt. xxii. 42-45; Rev. xxii. 16.) And this, I apprehend, is the only legitimate ground of the *federal and representative* headship of Christ, in reference to the human family, upon which alone his sacrificial atonement for their sins, and his mediatorial office and sacerdotal character can repose; and I presume, these constitute the only foundation of a *sinner's* hopes of salvation from a just and holy God. (See Heb. vii. throughout, and ix. 11 to 28, and *read* them.)

In conclusion, you say—"There seem to us many inconsistencies scattered up and down this pamphlet. The

author, though crying out against prejudice, has a strong prejudice and horror of what he, like many others, calls 'Socinianism.' This may, however, be readily forgiven in one so lately bound in darkness and error. That he is sincerely anxious for the truth, and that his labours will tend to its further dissemination, we cannot question, and therefore we heartily rejoice in his exertions." You here make an assertion against my pamphlet, without any proof; and against your assertion, I beg leave to say, *there is not the shadow of inconsistency in the whole work*; but on the contrary, the most perfect harmony, consistency, and truth pervade every page and every line. You charge me with "prejudice," meaning thereby, I presume, a groundless prepossession and fallacious persuasion of dangerous error in the system of theology alluded to; that is, what you designate as simple "Unitarianism;" but which, involving a denial of the miraculous conception of the Son of God, and also of his pre-existence and essential divinity, is a *degenerated* species of "Socinianism," although certainly a *corruption* of even the original heresy of Lælius and Faustus Socinus, from whom the system sprang. This notorious perversion of revealed truth, I most certainly do detest and abhor, exactly as you do the complex Deity or polytheism of the Trinitarian and Unitarian schemes of Athanasianism; and I may just as truly charge you with "inconsistency" and groundless "prejudice" against those illusive theories, as you can accuse me of those weaknesses in reference to what I call "Socinianism." If the Bible be true, this is a gross, palpable, fundamental, and most dangerous and destructive error; and God forbid that it should ever receive the shadow of countenance or support from me. I place it on a level in point of atrocity, with the "horrors" of Popery; and both I consider as the very essence of the "depths of Satan," described by the Son of God in Rev. ii. 24, and as equally subversive of every true principle of genuine Christianity, and consequently of the acceptable worship of the "only true God" through "the Son of his love."

I assure you, I neither require nor will I accept of any "forgiveness" for this innate and irreconcilable aversion to every thing bordering on the *Socinian* heresy: on the contrary, I trust I ever shall persevere and glory in the most implacable hostility to it; one of my avowed

objects, being to wage a war of extermination against it, as long as the breath of life is in my body.

Finally; You are much mistaken when you say that I have been so "lately bound in darkness and error." It is many years, at least twenty-five, since God first enlightened me to see and reject the fallacies of the Athanasian scheme, and above twelve since I saw and embraced that true and invulnerable system of theological truth, which I have partially developed in my "Expostulatory Letter and Challenge;" and which, like "the little stone cut out of the mountain without hands," is, I believe, destined to break in pieces and destroy every other system and scheme of human invention, which now distracts, divides, and disgraces the nominally Christian world in all parts of its dominion.—I am Sir, very respectfully,

Your humble Servant,

SAMUEL TUCKER.

P. S. I do not quarrel with either the *word* "Unitarian" or the principles of "Unitarianism," so far as they simply indicate the belief of Supreme Godhead being limited to *one* "PERSON," who is *one* SPIRIT, *one* BEING: but I strenuously contend for the essential divinity as distinct Beings, *but not co-equal* with GOD, of both his Son and Holy Spirit. The denial of this I consider to be the essence of the SOCINIAN HERESY, *alias* INFIDELITY; and as such I deprecate and reject it, as *a most fatal error* in Christian theology. S. T.

LIVERPOOL, 15th June, 1833.

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*The Evidences of Christianity. By William Ellery Channing, D. D.*

(Continued from page 374.)

I HAVE thus set before you one view of Jesus Christ, which shows him to have been the most extraordinary being who ever lived. I invite your attention to another, and I am not sure but that it is still more striking. You have seen the consciousness of greatness which Jesus possessed; I now ask you to consider how, with this consciousness, he lived among men. To convey my meaning more distinctly, let me avail myself of an imaginary case. Suppose you had never heard the particulars of Christ's history, but were told in general, that ages ago an extraordinary man appeared in the world, whose mind was



wholly possessed with the idea of having come from God, who regarded himself as clothed with divine power, and charged with the sublimest work in the universe; who had the consciousness of sustaining a relation of unexampled authority and beneficence, not to one nation or age, but to all nations and all times, and who anticipated a spiritual kingdom and everlasting power beyond the grave. Suppose you should be told that on entering the world, he found not one mind able to comprehend his views, and felt himself immeasurably exalted in thought and purpose above all around him; and suppose you should then be asked what appearance, what mode of life, what tone, what air, what deportment, what intercourse with the multitude seemed to you to suit such a character, and were probably adopted by him; how would you represent him to your minds? Would you not suppose that with this peculiar character, he adopted some peculiar mode of life expressive of his superiority to, and separation from all other men? Would you not expect something distinctive in his appearance? Would you not expect him to assume some badge, and to exact some homage? Would you not expect, that with a mind revolving such vast thoughts, and raised above the earth, he would look coldly on the ordinary gratifications of men? that with a mind spreading itself over the world; and meditating its subjection to his truth, he would take little interest in ordinary individuals? and that possessing in his own doctrine and character a standard of sublime virtue, he would attach little importance to the low attainments of the ignorant and superstitious around him? Would you not make him a public character, and expect to see him labouring to establish his ascendancy among public men? Would you not expect to see his natural affections absorbed in his universal philanthropy, and would not private attachments seem to you quite inconsistent with his vast superiority, and the immensity of his purposes? Would you not expect him to avail himself of the best accommodations the world could afford? Would you not expect the great Teacher to select the most sacred spots for his teaching, and the Lord of all to erect some conspicuous seat from which should go forth the laws which were to reach the ends of the earth? Would you not, in a word, expect this extraordinary personage to surround himself with extraordinary circumstances, and

to maintain a separation from the degraded multitude around him?

Such, I believe, would be the expectation of us all; and what was the case with Jesus? Read his history. He comes with the consciousness of more than human greatness to do an infinite work; and where do you find him? What is his look? what his manner? How does he converse, how live with men? His appearance, mode of life, and intercourse, are directly the reverse of what we should have supposed. He comes in the ordinary dress of the class of society in which he had grown up. He retreats to no solitude like John, to strike awe, nor seeks any spot which had been consecrated in Jewish history. Would you find him? Go to the house of Peter the fisherman—go to the well of Samaria, where he rests after the fatigues of his journey. Would you hear him teach? You may find him indeed sometimes in the Temple, for that was a place of general resort, but commonly you may find him instructing in the open air, now from a boat on the Galilean lake, now on a mount, and now in the streets of a crowded city. He has no place wherein to lay his head, nor will he have one. A rich ruler comes and falls at his feet. He says “Go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and then come and follow me.” Nor was this all. Something more striking remains to be told. He did ~~not~~ merely live in the streets and in the houses of fishermen. In these places, had he pleased, he might have cleared a space around him, and raised a barrier between himself and others. But in these places, and everywhere, he lived with men as a man, a brother, a friend, sometimes a servant; and entered with a deep, unexampled sympathy into the feelings, interests, wants, sorrows of individuals—of ordinary men, and even of the most depressed, despised, and forsaken of the race. Here is the most striking view of Jesus. This combination of the spirit of humanity, in its lowliest, tenderest form, with the consciousness of unrivalled and divine glories, is the most wonderful distinction of this wonderful character. Here we learn the chief reason why he chose poverty, and refused every peculiarity of manner and appearance. He did this because he desired to come near to the multitude of men, to make himself accessible to all, to pour out the fulness of his sympathy upon all, to know and weep over their sorrows and sins, and to manifest his interest in their affections and joys.

I shall offer but a few instances of this sympathy of Christ with human nature in all its varieties of character and condition. But how beautiful are they! At the very opening of his ministry, we find him present at a marriage, to which he and his disciples had been called. Among the Jews this was an occasion of peculiar exhilaration and festivity, but Jesus did not therefore decline it. He knew what affections, joys, sorrows, and moral influences are bound up in this institution, and he went to the celebration, not as an ascetic, to frown on its bright hopes and warm congratulations, but to sanction it by his presence, and to heighten its enjoyments. How little does this comport with the solitary dignity which we should have previously pronounced most accordant with his character, and what a spirit of humanity does it breathe! But this event stands almost alone in his history. His chief sympathy was not with them who rejoice, but with the ignorant, sinful, sorrowful; and with these we find him cultivating an habitual intimacy. Though so exalted in thought and purpose, he chose uneducated men to be his chief disciples; and he lived with them, not as a superior, giving occasional and formal instruction, but became their companion, travelled with them on foot, slept in their dwellings, sat at their tables, partook their plain fare, communicated to them his truth in the simplest form; and though they constantly misunderstood him and never received his full meaning, he was never wearied with teaching them. So familiar was his intercourse, that we find Peter reproving him with an affectionate zeal for announcing his approaching death, and we find John leaning on his bosom. Of his last discourse to these disciples, I need not speak. It stands alone among all writings, for the union of tenderness and majesty. His own sorrows are forgotten in his solicitude to speak peace and comfort to his humble followers.

The depth of his human sympathies, was beautifully manifested when children were brought to him. His disciples judging as all men would judge, thought that he who was sent to wear the crown of universal empire, had too great a work before him to give his time and attention to children, and reproved the parents who brought them; but Jesus rebuking his disciples, called to him the children. Never, I believe, did childhood awaken such deep love as at that moment. He took them in his arms

and blessed them, and not only said that "of such is the kingdom of heaven," but added, "He that receiveth a little child in my name, receiveth me;" so entirely did he identify himself with this primitive, innocent, beautiful form of human nature.

There was no class of human beings so low as to be beneath his sympathy. He not merely taught the publican and sinner, but with all the consciousness of purity, sat down and dined with them; and when reproved by the malignant Pharisee for such companionship, answered by the touching parables of the lost sheep and the prodigal son, and said, "I am come to seek and to save that which was lost."

No personal suffering dried up this fountain of love in his breast. On his way to the cross, he heard some women of Jerusalem bewailing him, and at the sound, forgetting his own grief, he turned to them and said "Women of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children." On the cross, whilst his mind was divided between intense suffering and the contemplation of the infinite blessings in which his sufferings were to issue, his eye lighted on his mother and John, and the sensibilities of a son and a friend mingled with the sublime consciousness of the universal Lord and Saviour. Never before did natural affection find so tender and beautiful an utterance. To his mother he said, directing her to John, "*Behold thy son*; I leave my beloved disciple to take my place, to perform my filial offices, and to enjoy a share of that affection with which you have followed me through life;" and to John he said, "*Behold thy mother*; I bequeath to you the happiness of ministering to my dearest earthly friend." Nor is this all. The spirit of humanity had one higher triumph. Whilst his enemies surrounded him with a malignity unsoftened by his last agonies, and to give the keenest edge to insult, reminded him scoffingly of the high character and office which he had claimed, his only notice of them was the prayer, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

Thus Jesus lived with men; with the consciousness of unutterable majesty, he joined a lowliness, gentleness, humanity, and sympathy, which have no example in human history. I ask you to contemplate this wonderful union. In proportion to the superiority of Jesus to all around him, was the intimacy, the brotherly love with which he bound

himself to them. I maintain that this is a character wholly remote from human conception. To imagine it to be the production of imposture, or fanaticism, shows a strange unsoundness of mind. I contemplate it with a veneration, second only to the profound awe with which I look up to God. It bears no mark of human invention. It was real. It belonged to, and it manifested the beloved Son of God.

But I have not done. May I ask your attention a few moments more? We have not yet reached the depth of Christ's character. We have not touched the great principle on which his wonderful sympathy was founded, and which endeared to him his office of universal Saviour. Do you ask what this deep principle was? It was his conviction of the greatness of the human soul. He saw in man the impress and image of the Divinity, and therefore thirsted for his redemption, and took the tenderest interest in him, whatever might be the rank, character, or condition in which he was found. This spiritual view of man pervades and distinguishes the teaching of Christ. Jesus looked on men with an eye which pierced beneath the material frame. The body vanished before him. The trappings of the rich, the rags of the poor, were nothing to him. He looked through them, as though they did not exist, to the soul; and there, amidst clouds of ignorance and plague-spots of sin, he recognised a spiritual and immortal nature, and the germs of power and perfection, which might be unfolded for ever. In the most fallen and depraved man, he saw a being who might become an angel of light. Still more, he felt that there was nothing in himself to which men might not ascend. His own lofty consciousness did not sever him from the multitude; for he saw in his own greatness the model of what men might become. So deeply was he thus impressed, that again and again, in speaking of his future glories, he announced that in these his true followers were to share. They were to sit on his throne and partake of his beneficent power.

Here I pause, and indeed I know not what can be added to heighten the wonder, reverence, and love which are due to Jesus. When I consider him not only as possessed with the consciousness of unexampled and unbounded majesty, but as recognising a kindred nature in all human beings, and living and dying to raise them to a participation of his divine glories; and when I see him

under these views allying himself to men by the tenderest ties, embracing them with a spirit of humanity which no insult, injury, or pain could for a moment repel or overpower, I am filled with wonder as well as reverence and love. I feel that this character is not of human invention, that it was not assumed through fraud, or struck out by fanaticism, for it is infinitely above their reach. When I add this character of Jesus to the other evidences of his religion, it gives to what before seemed so strong, a new and a vast accession of strength; I feel as if I could not be deceived. The Gospels must be true; they were drawn from a living original; they were founded on reality. The character of Jesus is not a fiction; he was what he claimed to be, and what his followers attested. Nor is this all. Jesus not only *was*, he is still, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. He exists now; he has entered that heaven to which he always looked forward on earth. There he lives and reigns. With a clear, calm faith, I see him in that state of glory; and I confidently expect, at no distant period, to see him face to face. We have indeed no absent friend whom we shall so surely meet. Let us, then, by imitation of his virtues and obedience to his word, prepare ourselves to join him in those pure mansions, where he is surrounding himself with the good and pure of our race, and will communicate to them for ever his own spirit, power, and joy.

(To be continued.)

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*To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.*

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SIR,—Your valuable correspondent (p. 374) has vindicated the memory of our favourite Reformer, from the charge of having actually instigated, like Calvin in the case of Servetus, “the persecution exercised on the person of Francis David.” Whether the Polish Reformer (too nearly approaching that “bad eminence” which the Geneva Reformer must ever occupy, till the genius and the wrongs of Servetus shall be forgotten) had cherished a principle which authorised such a persecution; or whether, “in regard to the general question of religious toleration, Socinus rose far above the prevailing spirit of his age,” Mr. Yates, though inclined to the latter opinion, regards as an inquiry, still *sub judice*.

There is a previous inquiry which has, I believe, never been proposed. This reserve is not a little surprising; for, it may be reasonably asked, how could Socinus allow himself to maintain the relations of Christian, or of merely social amity, with such a man as Blandrata, especially if his gross immoralities had been fully developed?

"The ever-memorable John Hales," in his Sermon on "Dealing with erring Christians," refers to *Chrysostom*, for "the ancient customs of the *Olympic* games," designed to ascertain the character of the combatants. He then requires, as indispensable for the Christian *athletæ*, that they "be of pure and upright condition." John Hales happily adds:—

"Let men's skill and judgment be never so good, yet if their lives be notoriously subject to exception, let them know, that there is no place for them in these *Olympics*. Men, indeed, have found out a distinction between an honest man and a good commonwealth's man; but in the commonwealth of God, we can admit of no such distinction. The world for the managing of her matters, may employ such as herself hath fitted; but it is very expedient that none but right good men should undertake the Lord's quarrels."

To Socinus, few will deny the qualification of "pure and upright intention," whatever may be their own theological tendencies. Of his colleague, what can be said on this subject? Dr. Rees, whose research and accuracy are well known, has not considered the question I have proposed, though he relates (*Hist. Introd.* xiv.), on the authority of "the Unitarian ministers of Transylvania," as given by *Bod*, that "in 1574, Blandrata having been guilty of a gross offence which his accusers have veiled under the designation of *peccatum Italicum*, David declined all further intercourse with him, and took measures to destroy his influence in the Unitarian body."

Yet only four years later, when the *peccatum Italicum* had scarcely been forgotten, Socinus appears to have commenced a confidential correspondence with this sullied character; accepting the invitation to a journey and entertainment at his expense, and conducting a disputation under his influence. Nor can it be fairly denied, as I sincerely wish it could, that Socinus furnished to Blandrata too many facilities for the prosecution of David, whose story has added to the numerous proofs, that too often

with persecuted confessors, as with captive princes, "there is only a short distance between the prison and the grave."

Here, leaving this very puzzling question, of a coalition between such uncongenial characters as Socinus and Blandrata, and desiring from some of your correspondents a solution more honourable to the memory of our Polish Reformer than my examination has discovered, I return to Mr. Yates.

Your correspondent has stated "the charge of persecution brought against Faustus Socinus" in the precise terms quoted by Dr. Toulmin (*Mem.* 83). That ever-diligent and faithful and generally exact writer, there ascribed the charge to "Reland's Four Treatises on the Doctrine, &c. of the Mahometans." To the same he also attributed (*Mem.* 289) the misrepresentation of "a perfect conformity between Socinus and Mahomet." Hadrian Reland, whom a Catholic biographer describes as securing attachments "par la sureté de son commerce, et par sa modestie et sa candeur," was incapable of such a calumny; nor does he appear to have given any opinion on the questions in difference between David and Socinus, or on the conduct of the latter towards a supposed erring brother. He would probably, on the common principles of the disputants, have regarded David as by far the most consistent Christian reformer. Such he will now be generally regarded, at least by British, Irish, and American Unitarians. I employ the term in an extended sense, and not as restricted by Priestley and Belsham, who, though just and candid, and generally enlightened, had no Christian authority to monopolise "the worthy name by which they were called," so as to refuse the right hand of *Unitarian* fellowship to their friend Dr. Price.

I hazard this opinion of Dr. Price's just claim to the *Unitarian* distinction, after observing how that pious and interesting preacher in his sermon "on the pre-existence and dignity of Christ," has maintained without the least qualification, "that whatever may be the dignity of Christ or our obligations to him, the only object of our religious worship is, that one Supreme Being who sent him into the world." It is obvious that an adherence to such a rule of Christian worship could not possibly consist with that invocation of Christ, for which Socinus too eagerly contended, in the absence of our Lord's authority (as he



fully admitted), if not in opposition to his commands, though, doubtless, with a pious purpose of honouring the Saviour, and of edifying those who called themselves by his name.

The "Four Treatises concerning the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Mahometans," by an anonymous translator, "London, 1712," are now before me. The contents of the 8vo. volume are thus expressed on the title-page.

"1. An abridgement of the Mahometan Religion; out of Arabic into Latin: by H. Reland.—2. A Defence of the Mahometans, from several charges falsely laid against them by Christians; in Latin: by H. Reland.—3. A (Latin) Treatise of Bobovius, concerning the Liturgy of the Turks, &c.—4. Reflections on Mahometanism and Socinianism. From the French."

The references in the "Memoirs of Socinus," are entirely confined to the fourth Treatise, with which the translator and author of the first and second had no concern. Dr. Toulmin was probably misled by observing the name of Reland alone on the title-page. This I rather conjecture from my having suffered more than once the same error to escape from the press. Reland is occasionally quoted in the fourth Treatise, though not to depreciate Socinus or Socinians, which was the evident purpose of the anonymous author. This he expected to pursue, especially as to "the portraiture of the Heresiarch, Faustus Socinus, and the detail of his adventures," in "another work," to be entitled, "L'Histoire du Socinianisme conduite jusqu'à notre tems."

These "historical and critical reflections" were written by some learned Protestant who amply vituperates "the Romish Church." He was a friend of Leibnitz, from whom at the close of the Treatise, there is a very respectful letter dated from "Berlin, Dec. 2, 1706."

I have so far exceeded all reasonable limits, that the only *amende honorable* I can offer, is an abrupt conclusion. I may possibly return to the subject, should I not be fully anticipated, as is highly probable, by "an article" promised (p. 482) "on Faustus Socinus."

CIVIS RUSTICUS.

P. S. Since I introduced *Capito* to your notice, I have found him thus mentioned by *Œcomlampadius*, in a letter to *Bucer*, 5th Aug. 1531, on *Servetus de Trinitatis*

*erroribus.* "Inorsi, hæc hebdomada, *Bernates*, qui te, et *Capitonem*, salutant plurimum." Servetus was now residing at Strasburg, and by Christian conferences, might have contributed to procure for Capito that distinguished station in the *Bibliotheca Antitrinitariorem*, to which, probably in 1531, he had not yet sufficient pretensions.

De la Roche says: "Servet prit la route de Lyon, et de Geneve, pour aller à Bâle; et après avoir conféré avec Oecompalade, il partoît pour Strasbourg, souhaitant passionnement de s'entretenir avec Bucer et Capiton."—*Bibl. Ang.* ii. 80. C. R.

### *On the Moral Constitution and History of Man.*

#### PART II.—CHAPTER IV.

WE have said, that the principal movements in Europe, between the reign of Gregory VII. and Innocent III. were the Crusades. There was another series of moving causes, however, less striking indeed in external appearance, but having a considerable influence internally on the condition and character of the Church, even before the time of Gregory; but which underwent a peculiar modification in the 12th and 13th centuries. I speak of the monastic orders and ascetic tribes, of whose history it is necessary to take some notice, in order to understand those schemes of Innocent which completed the usurpations of the Church.

The influence of the monks and ascetics, as formerly observed, was not official but personal—the result of popular opinion respecting their extraordinary piety. This reputation was gained almost entirely by their penances and mortifications—a species of virtue that was considered of the highest description in those days; partly because such things were considered in the light of atonements, and partly from the opinion, that all moral evil was inherent in *matter*, and therefore to be subdued by bodily mortifications. Their mode of doing this, was by fastings, seclusion, and voluntary poverty; while they devoted their time to prayer and contemplation. In prosecuting this system, they proceeded to the most ridiculous lengths; but the more extravagant their penances were, they gained the greater credit with the superstitious multitude,

who were persuaded that such *saints* must doubtless have great influence as intercessors with heaven.

When their number had greatly increased in any particular age or country, they formed themselves into communities, and lived or professed to live under specific rules; one of which always was, that of poverty. Such, however, was the devotion of the people to them, that these communities generally acquired wealth, and lost sight of their original vows of poverty. But new orders or distinguished individuals were always arising; who, by professing stricter rules, succeeded for the time to the reputation of the original hermits.

In general, the influence of the monastic orders, and of the ascetic tribes, was the same with that of the priests. But in process of time, when the bishops and the established orders, and above all, when the Court of Rome became pampered with wealth and sunk into luxury, this raised the enmity of those monks who adhered to the original practice of mortifications and abstraction from the world. In consequence, many of those ascetics began, during the 12th and 13th centuries, to declaim against the corruption of the Church, although they did not call in question her doctrine, or the primary grounds of her authority; but this led others by degrees to dispute even her dogmas and original rights. At this period, therefore, the *personal* authority of such teachers, resting on their character for piety as that of the ancient hermits did, began to be opposed to the *official* dogmas and authority of the Church and of the clergy.

It was to quash this growing spirit that the Inquisition was established; and fortunately for the Popes, they got certain new orders of monks to enter into their views and co-operate with them. These were the Franciscans and Dominicans. All the former established orders had departed from their original rule of poverty; and wallowing in wealth and luxury, were liable to the same accusations of profligacy with the secular clergy. These two orders, and others of minor consequence, adopted not only the rule of personal poverty, but of absolute *mendicity*. The older monks easily evaded the rules of poverty, by accepting property for the benefit of their communities, although they held no personal right over it; but these new orders held all rights to property whatever, and subsisted by begging.

The silly multitude, always easily taken in by pretences to *ascetic morality*, immediately bestowed their highest regard upon the mendicants; and these Dominicans and Franciscans recommended themselves to the special goodwill of the Pontiffs, by an active zeal for the orthodoxy and rights of the Church, in opposition to that class of ascetics and heretics who denied them. And such was the devotion of the people to these mendicants, that they preferred them to the official clergy or priests, in being confessed and absolved by them. Many went even the length of believing, that if they but died in the habit of a Franciscan or Dominican, they had a sure passport to heaven.

The official clergy were a good deal offended at this, but the Pope who saw his interest in supporting them, formally granted the mendicant monks the right of preaching, of confessing, and of absolving; and to make some amends for their severe rule of poverty, he was very liberal in giving them *indulgences* to dispose of, by which means they acquired a source of revenue which was neither personal nor corporate. At the long run, they got even their rule of poverty modified by the Popes in other respects, and came to be the most opulent and powerful orders of all the monastic tribes, till the rise of the Jesuits. But our business is not to follow out their history. We wished only to point out the source of their intimate connection with the Roman Pontiff, and how it came about that the Dominican Friars were specially employed as the agents of the Inquisition.

This brings us forward to the age of Innocent III. We behold the Pope now (in the thirteenth century) strengthened by the habits and aggressions of the spiritual power since the time of Gregory VII.; lording it over the kings of the earth, setting up some, and deposing others at his pleasure; we see him the absolute head of the Church, not merely in point of ecclesiastical authority, but in respect of its temporal possessions. He had assumed directly into his own hands the appointment to all the most considerable benefices of Europe—keeping them vacant frequently for a time, and appropriating the revenues to his own use—taxing them in other instances, and in all cases filling them with his own creatures. We behold him having formed an alliance with the new orders of mendicant monks, making them his tools, and even con-

triving through means of their traffic in indulgences and their confiscations of heretical property, to swell his coffers still more extravagantly.

And this man, setting himself above all that is called god among men (that is, in the language of Scripture, persons in authority), "sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself to be God" (or at least his vicar on earth)—this was the alleged representative of the meek and lowly Jesus, and the supposed successor of Peter the fisherman—this was the expounder of that Gospel which forbade to its disciples the love of riches or of power, and enjoined the practice of mercy and benevolence. Ay, this was he in all human pomp and glory! But we know how the Scriptures characterise him, and how those things which sometimes appear fair and imposing to man, may be an abomination to God.

Nor must we separate him from the system; for as the head was corrupt, so were all the members. The kings and bishops, indeed, felt his exactions; and began, shortly after this period, to treat the supreme Pontiff as a despot, and to rebel against his authority: but in the mean time, like all other persons living under a despotism, they partook of its spirit and corruption, and acted over again in their smaller spheres, the same system of exaction and tyranny upon the unhappy people. The historians of all parties, even the Roman Catholics themselves, are loud in their complaints of the universal corruption which prevailed for two centuries previous to the Reformation, among all classes of mankind, and especially among churchmen. In the emphatic language of the Prophet—"the whole head was sick, the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, there was nothing but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores."

But as specific facts make a more lasting impression than general descriptions, we shall conclude this historical sketch with some of Innocent's particular transactions. In England the Archbishopric of Canterbury having fallen vacant, the convent proceeded regularly to the election of John de Grey to that high dignity; and this election was confirmed, as it required to be, by the authority of King John. Innocent, however, had laid out the place in his own mind for one Stephen Langton, a Roman Cardinal whom he consecrated, and sent over with a letter to John,

requesting him in the first instance in soothing enough terms to complete Langton's investiture. The king refused, and after some ineffectual negotiation to compromise the matter, the Pontiff laid the kingdom under *interdict*. The effect of this would have been, to put an immediate stop to divine service, to shut up the churches, to suspend the administration of the sacraments, and even the burial of the dead in consecrated places, and with the accustomed rites. But this interdict was partially evaded by one order of the monks and some of the bishops, who had the courage to protest against the injustice of the Pope's proceedings. Innocent thus finding his interdict insufficient to reduce the king to obedience, proceeded next to excommunicate him personally, and absolve his subjects from their allegiance; and finally assembling a council of cardinals and prelates, he formally deposed John, and declared the throne of England vacant. At the same time he wrote to Philip Augustus, king of France, authorising and requesting him to execute this sentence, and to unite the kingdom of England for ever to his dominions. All the other Christian princes were likewise exhorted to aid Philip in this enterprise; and the same indulgences were promised to those who should take up arms in the cause, that were granted to others employed against the infidels in Palestine.

The French monarch entering readily into the views of the Roman Pontiff, made immense preparations for the purpose: while John, terrified at what might be the consequences, listened to an insidious proposal of Pandulph, the Pope's legate; and was induced to solicit the protection of Innocent, upon the condition of rendering homage to him for his kingdom, and receiving it back again for a certain tribute for ever, to the See of Rome, as the superior of the kingdom. This shameful ceremony, including his taking oaths as a vassal to his liege lord, was performed publicly at Dover; and while John in doing homage presented a sum of money to the Pope's representative, the proud legate trampled it under his feet, as a mark of the king's dependance. And not even satisfied with this mortifying insult, Pandulph kept the crown and sceptre five whole days, and then restored them as a special favour from the Roman See. Such was a sample of this Pope's pretensions and conduct, of which history records several similar instances.

But the grand exploit of Innocent, was the erection of the Inquisition. I shall give a short account of the cause and origin of it from a French author, whose partialities are more in favour of Catholicism than of Protestant opinions, and therefore not liable to any suspicion of exaggeration. "The attention of the popes about this time (says our author) began to be directed towards a host of sects, who, under the name of Cathari (Puritans), Apostolicals, Waldenses, and Albigenses, pretended to restore the Church to its primitive purity—who preached up the contempt of riches and grandeur, and who wished to make the ministers of religion simple teachers and servants of the altar. Former popes endeavoured to suppress these rising opinions, merely by means of the ancient discipline of the Church; but finding these ineffectual, Innocent III. formed the monstrous idea of preaching a crusade against the heretics, in the same manner as had been done against the infidels. The south of France was the principal seat of these new opinions; it was there where we behold the ravages of a war, the most ferocious and detestable, with which the pages of history were ever ensanguined. Few events have ever had consequences so disastrous, so multiplied, and so lasting as these crusades; so opposed to the true spirit of religion. This war of extermination lasted twenty-one years, with very short intervals. The most extravagant fanaticism, the most brutal barbarity, the thirst of pillage united to that of conquest, laid these beautiful countries waste, and destroyed an entire generation, without destroying the heresies against which such measures were directed.

"This right of punishing heresy which the popes thus arrogated to themselves, led to the right of searching it out, and from that again arose the *Inquisition*. Innocent III. created this bloody tribunal at the close of the Albigensian war. This Pope made the Christian princes servants and executioners to the Inquisition, enjoining them to take up the sword for the Church whenever she required it, under pain of excommunication, of deposition, and even of civil infamy. The duty of inquisitors was at first imposed on the bishops with certain assistants, and with the most unlimited powers to penetrate into the secrets of families, and even of people's private thoughts—a more odious and debasing slavery than the most ingenious despotism had ever contrived. But even this

was not enough. The bishops and secular priests having local connections and sympathies with the people, might temper the exercise of their authority with mercy. It was found necessary to have the ministers of the Inquisition entirely dependant on the Court of Rome, and absolutely devoted to its interests. They must be persons at leisure, and not distracted with other affairs. They must be detached from parents, friends, and connexions—in short, having a regard for nobody whatever, either in respect of general considerations or particular relationship. They must be harsh and inflexible, without pity or compassion—the fit tools of a tribunal, the most rigorous and severe the world ever heard of. The new order of mendicant friars founded by St. Dominic, united all the requisite qualities, and from them the inquisitors were accordingly chosen.”

Such was the state of the Church in the 13th century. It had indeed become a “kingdom,” and nominally under the authority of Christ; but alas! how different from the reign of those moral principles and precepts, which he declared to be the rules of *his* kingdom, and the distinctive character of *his* subjects. And not different only, but diametrically opposite. Yet this strange metamorphosis—this hideous delusion, all sprang from that original error to which we formerly adverted, namely—that God was not benevolent either in his own character or in the rules of morality enjoined on man; but that he still required to be propitiated by *some sort* of penances, sacrifices, or intercessions, and to be served through the medium of priests. Thus the ways of God were involved in a mystery, impenetrable by the vulgar, and only to be interpreted as occasion required, by a class of initiated and professional expounders, or rather deputies with discretionary authority!

The kingdom founded upon these principles, had the form, but was destitute of the power of godliness. Its functionaries made a worldly gain, and claimed a worldly power in the name of godliness. They exercised all manner of impostures, intolerance, and oppression, in its name. They were the wolves in sheep's clothing who devoured the flock. They were tyrants who governed by means of *fear* and *force*, utterly ignorant of the spirit of that Master whom they professed to serve, and of the principles of that moral reign which he came to establish



on the earth. And all this because they had abandoned his instructions, and given themselves to fables of their own invention, to disputes of their own raising, to contrivances of their own imagination, under the pretence of effecting ends which were often useless, or where they aimed at what was useful means, had already been provided and pointed out by their Master, far more efficacious than those of their stupid contrivance. In short, this kingdom began and ended with calling other men masters than Christ; and a pretty master they got at length, as we have seen. It commenced by casting a mist over the plain doctrines of Christ's personal teaching, and it ended by involving religion in utter darkness and contradiction.

SALT COATS, Sept. 1839.

W. B.

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### *French Catholic Church.*

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IN the Eighth Report of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association lately published, the Committee remark, p. 15,—“Amongst other evidences of a movement in the public mind of France, may be mentioned a large secession from the Roman Catholic Church, and the organization by some popular leaders, of a Society under the title of ‘Eglise Catholique Française.’ In a tract set forth as its profession of faith, it declares the rejection of all creeds and human articles of faith; the words of Christ and his Apostles to be the only rule of faith and conduct, and the duty of worshipping the Father as the only God, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.” By the kindness of a friend, we have been favoured with a copy of the tract, and are glad to announce that a translation of it has been published by the Newcastle Unitarian Tract Society; price one shilling for 40 copies.

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### *Answer to the Question, Why do you go to the French Catholic Church (Rue du Faubourg St. Martin) in Paris?*

“Be ready to give an answer to every one that asketh you a reason.” 1 St. Peter iii. 15.

“Prove all things.” St. Paul (1 Thess. v. 21).

1. Because the French Church rejects all human creeds and articles of faith, and follows invariably the Bible: and because the words of our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles, are its only rule of faith and conduct.

2. Because the doctrine of the French Church may be expressed by the words of Jesus and his apostles alone, without addition or gloss. Whence, it is evidently more conformable to Holy Scripture.

"Then one of the Scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Master, which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, The Lord our God is the only Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: there is none other commandment greater than these.—And the Scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth, for there is One God, and there is none other but He; and to love Him with all the understanding, and with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is better than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." Mark xii. 28–34.

"This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the Only True God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." John xvii. 3.

"To us there is but One God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him: and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." 1 Cor. viii. 6.

"God is One." Gal. iii. 20.

"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Eph. iv. 6.

"There is One God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. ii. 5.

3. Because, at the French Church, I am not led to think that those who do not believe in the doctrine of that Church, "must without doubt perish everlastingly;" and because I am there continually exhorted to "live in charity with all men."

4. Because, in that same Church, I am at full liberty to judge for myself, and to follow my conscience and my reason, without being exposed to the least censure.

"One is your master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."—Matt. xxiii. 8.

"Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free; and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."—Gal. v. 1.

5. Because it is easy for me to comprehend the doctrine taught in the French Church; which gives no assent to any thing that is contrary to reason.

"Why even of your own selves judge ye not what is right?" Luke xii. 57.

"—which is your reasonable service." Rom. xii. 1.

6. Because it is our advantage and duty to practise the

worship of One God, the Father, according to the instructions of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"When ye pray, say, Our Father." Matt. vi. 9, Luke xii. 2.

"The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." John iv. 23.

"And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He will give it you." John xvi. 23.

7. Because, at the French Church, I can follow the example of Christ, which ought to be our model in all things, even in the worship of One God, the Father, without intermixing in my devotions a "God the Son," a "God the Holy Ghost," a "holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity," a "Three Persons in One God," a "Sacred Three," or a "Holy Mother of God, the Virgin Mary;" for the worship of whom I find no commandment in the Bible.

"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth."—Luke x. 21.

"O my Father, let this cup pass from me!"—Matt. xxvi. 39.

"Father, glorify Thy Son."—"Holy Father, keep through Thine own Name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are."—John xvii. 1, 11.

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."—Luke xxiv. 34.

8. Because, in the hymns and songs of the French Church, I am not continually offended by expressions, which seem equally incompatible with reason and holy Scripture; and because the Almighty Eternal God is not represented to me, sometimes as a feeble infant on its mother's knees, sometimes as dying to expiate the wrath of a Supremely Good God; nor is it ever said, as in the Romish Church,

This infant is the mighty God,

Come to be suckled and adored.

Because, in fine, one would blush to teach there, that "God died to expiate original sin."

9. Because, at the French Church, I hear Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, preached as "the Christ, the Son of the Living God;" and not as God who died and was buried, and rose again from the dead. The Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, announces that "it is Christ that died" (viii. 34); and moreover "that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." (1 Cor. xv. 3.)

The Apostles did not preach that Christ was a divine

person who remained in the crucified man, a person who by his partaking of Deity could not die or be buried; but they maintained that "God hath made that same Jesus who was crucified both Lord and Christ."

10. Because the French Church teaches the doctrine of the True Grace of God; whose favour cannot be merited or purchased by mankind: which is quite conformable to the Holy Scripture.

"God so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16.

"The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Rom. vi. 23.

"By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8, 9.

"The grace of God which bringeth salvation.—Titus ii. 11.

11. Because, in the French Church, God is spoken of, according to the Scriptures, as a Being who is infinitely wise, just and good; as the Father of all: every thing which is there attributed to Him, is compatible with Infinite Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness; in harmony with his character as the Father of all; and with this maxim, "God is Love."

12. Because there the crucified Jesus is considered as exalted to the dignity of Saviour and Judge of the world, in reward of his obedience and perfect righteousness.

"He humbled himself and became obedient, even unto death, —therefore God hath highly exalted him."—Phillip. ii. 8, 9.

"Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."—Heb. i. 9.

13. Because there the Gospel is acknowledged to be the ministration of the Spirit of God.

"How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be much more glorious?"—2 Cor. iii. 8.

"For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him, are all things."—Rom. xi. 36.

"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."—Eph. iv. 6.

14. Because there the necessity of personal holiness is really felt: the spirit of Christ, and his exemplary life, are facts essential to true Christianity.

"If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—Rom. viii. 9.

"He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. He that saith he

abideth in him, ought himself so to walk, even as he walked."—1 John ii. 4, 6.

"Let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."—iii. 7.

15. Because there a future and just retribution is preached: that every man will be judged according to what he hath done, and not according to what he hath not done; and that our future condition is determined, not by an arbitrary and irresistible decree, but according to our actions.

"Then he will render to every man according to his works."—Matt. xvi. 27.

"For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive for the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."—2 Cor. v. 10.

16. Because there I am instructed to think of human nature, as being the work of God; and to love all men as my brethren.

"For we are also His offspring."—Acts xvii. 29.

"Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are, and were created."—Rev. iv. 11.

17. Because the Gospel preached by the French Church is conformable to the light of reason, within the reach of all, and consequently agreeable to the sentiment of religion given by our Lord himself when he calls it a revelation to babes, and suited to the poor.

18. Lastly, because at the same time that the Gospel is thus preached at the French Church in its simplicity, its evidences and its truth are maintained with an energy and efficacy, which I can attribute to nothing but the most faithful use of the means which God has given for the understanding of its doctrines.

Such are my reasons for going to the French Church. Are they not founded on Scripture? Reader; go thither also, and judge for yourself.

#### REVIEW.

*Memoirs of the late Rev. Thomas Belsham, &c. By John Williams.*

(Concluded from page 456.)

As we approach the close of these memoirs, we become more and more interested in marking the effects which a great change in a great mind will produce. That mind

we formerly beheld in slavery. Now we see it enjoying freedom. While it was enslaved, the light and air of heaven were admitted to it only through the narrow apertures of the metaphysical creeds, by which alone there was any communication between the prison-house and the external world. Now it is free, it can walk abroad and bask in the fresh air in the open day-light, and examine the works and read the word of God, and we feel curious to notice its actions and emotions. And while we are looking on and listening, these are the words which drop from the lips of the emancipated one upon our ears:—

“‘I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; I know in whom I have believed.’ The good cause is in good hands; it will go on and triumph. Lindsey, and Jebb, and Priestley, are no more; but the leaven which they have infused is working its way. The spark which they kindled has produced a flame which cannot be extinguished. I have been honoured, Oh how far beyond my deserts! as an instrument of carrying forward the same glorious cause of Christian truth.” p. 621.—“The latter years of life,” continues he, “are to me, beyond comparison, the happiest.”

And having enumerated several causes of his present high enjoyment, he adds:—

“The great thing of all, is the total and beneficial change in religious principles and views. In younger life, every thought of religion was melancholy, every feeling painful. I shudder at the recollection of all that I once believed and felt. With my present views no feeling is connected with religion but that of delight.” p. 655.

The revolution of years had no power to erase from Mr. Belsham’s mind, the recollection of the sufferings of his former theological thralldom, or to scathe the fervour of his rejoicing. On the commencement of the year 1817, which was the sixty-ninth of his age, he thus expresses the remembrance of the past, and the grateful feelings of the present:—

“But what I am most thankful for is, that God hath been pleased to purge away the scales of error and prejudice, and to lead me into the light of evangelical truth. What an inexhaustible source of vigour and comfort has this been. Alas! how was the cheerful season of youth chilled and depressed by the gloomy doctrine of Calvin. But the snare is broken, and I have escaped. And all my religious views and feelings are now of the most sublime and delightful kind.” p. 693.

And three years subsequently to this period, he reiterates similar sentiments.

"This year (1820) as usual, has been crowned with goodness: life continued, health even improved—all necessities, all comforts supplied and abounding—the kindness and liberality of friends I would particularly acknowledge. How much has the goodness of God surpassed all expectation and thought. I made a fine speculation when I forsook all for God and conscience."—"I must acknowledge that God has been a very kind and bountiful master to me. He knows the simplicity of my heart in its searches after truth, the difficulty and agony with which I abandoned old principles and old connexions; the long and painful struggles of my mind; my earnest prayers for divine direction; and finally, my renunciation of all earthly possessions, and earthly friends, and earthly prospects, and the confidence with which I cast myself upon his protecting providence. And since 1805, when my connexion began with this congregation (Essex-Street), every succeeding year has been crowned with additional mercy, and the last most of all." p. 717, 718.

Thus he went on his way rejoicing. God had enabled him to break asunder the chains of Calvinism with which he had in youth been manacled, and his gratitude for his liberation knew scarcely any bounds. And although we have no small quantity of important quotations from the diary of Mr. Belsham's latter years, and no trifling amount of his correspondence during this period; yet we would most gladly exchange no little of that superabundant matter relating to his dark and dreary, though younger days, which occupies the first four hundred pages of the memoirs for more lengthy particulars respecting the last twenty years of his life.

The remaining fifty pages carry us rapidly over the last eight years of this truly great, and learned, and good man's earthly career, and bring us to its close on the 11th of Nov. 1829, when he was nearly 80. These memoirs are on many accounts valuable. They are valuable, because they give a real living picture of the baleful effects of an irrational, unscriptural system, when a powerful mind and a generous heart have been encased within its iron folds. They are valuable, because they show us how the sighing prisoner of Calvin may escape to Christ. They are valuable, because they introduce us to the company of many who had effected their escape, and admit us to a participation of their pleasures. And they are valuable, because they add another convincing proof to those which have been furnished in the cases of Jebb, and Disney, and Lindsey, and Priestley, and a host of other wise and excellent men; and of Barbauld, and Cappe, and Hughes, and a multitude of other talented and pious women,—that

Christian Unitarianism is a more "excellent way" than that pointed by the persecutor and destroyer of the conscientious and virtuous Servetus.

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*The Moral Class-Book, or the Law of Morals; derived from the Created Universe, and from Revealed Religion. By William Sullivan, Counsellor at Law, Boston. London; Re-printed for Mardon.*

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Here is an able "Counsellor's advice" on scores of questions; each one of which is of infinitely greater importance than any mere question of law can be, offered to any one who will take it, at less than a fiftieth part of the sum charged for a "Counsellor's opinion" on the meaning of a musty old deed. And what is more, this advice is based on fact, and built with solid reasons, and crowned with benignity. Self-love, self-respect, and self-restraint, are here shown to be ill understood, but to be the necessary principles, or rather principle, by which human beings must regulate and direct their conduct, in order to be in harmony with the physical, organic, and moral laws; and thereby secure the happiness for which they were formed.

On education, fashion, amusements, marriage, religion, and other topics connected with these, the advice proffered to the young is invaluable. Many are the paragraphs which, in reading this excellent little book, we felt a desire to quote into this notice. But we are confident that we best consult our readers' interest, and most faithfully discharge our duty, by strongly recommending them to read carefully the book for themselves. It is plain, it is pleasing, it is concise, it is true. Take the following quotations from this little work as a specimen of what are its general character, spirit, and tendency. On the diffusion of Christianity, the writer justly remarks:—

"It is an unquestionable truth, that the best means of disseminating Christian faith and practice, is to cultivate the human mind, and to impart to it comprehensive and philosophic knowledge. The wisest men have been the truest Christians." p. 112.

On love, he with truth and beauty observes:—

"The propensity to love is one of the best in our nature, but it may run into the worst of afflictions. It seems to be a principle of nature, that the ruin of the highest and best is the deep-



est and worst of ruins. The human mind in its greatest and natural force, and best and purest cultivation, brings its possessor into an affinity with angels. The same mind gradually depraved and debased, and driven to raving and malicious madness, is a horrible example of what is fancied to be diabolical. So it is with love. In its true use, it is what is thought to be the happiness of heaven; in its perversions, who can find words to tell what it is?" p. 199.

A few pages of plain, pleasing, and pointed arguments on marriage, its difficulties, duties, and pleasures, bring us to the following fervid passage:—

"There is one in the world who feels for him who is sad—a keener pang than he feels for himself: there is one to whom reflected joy is better than that which comes direct; there is one who rejoices in another's honour, more than in any which is her own; there is one on whom another's transcendent excellence sheds no beam but that of delight; there is one who hides another's infirmities more faithfully than her own; there is one who loses all sense of *self* in the sentiment of kindness, tenderness, and devotion to another. That one is HER whom the Christian religion has given to the lord of earth to be his *companion*." p. 206.

In the paragraph which closes the volume, are the following excellent sentiments:

"We hope that we have shown why man should exist, and whence he comes, and whither he goes; and that if he be not a satisfied and grateful being while he is a mortal, he must accuse himself, and not complain that the system of being to which he belongs, is wrong and malevolent. We have attempted to prove that man individually and socially, is capable of improvement; that he has removed himself from his original condition, and has advanced far in disclosing his own powers, and in applying them in the promotion of his own happiness. But the main object which we have had in view, is to show that he has much further to go in the same course; that the way is known to him; that there are no obstacles in it which he may not remove." p. 274.

While we present our warm acknowledgments to the intelligent and benevolent author for his valuable contribution to the general public museum, to which all who please have access for instruction, enjoyment and permanent profit; we cannot but tender our hearty thanks to Mr. Mardon, the English publisher, for the promptitude and spirit with which he is constantly placing within our reach valuable productions from transatlantic pens. English readers owe him a large debt of gratitude which we ardently hope they will pay him, by possessing themselves of the publications which he has with so much laudable industry reprinted.

## THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, OCTOBER 1, 1833.

WE have delayed from month to month the insertion of the following letter from the Rev. Archibald Macdonald of Greenock, to the Rev. Mr. Taylor, the Universalist minister, in the hope that Mr. Taylor would appoint a time and place for the discussion of the important topics to which it refers. At least we hoped some reply would have been vouchsafed by this "accuser of the brethren." No notice whatever has been taken of Mr. Macdonald's letter. It is only another instance of its being more easy to bring a railing accusation, than to substantiate its truth. Surely such conduct is not in accordance with the spirit of Universalism.

*To Mr. Taylor.*

Rev. Sir,—I last night observed placards, intimating that in the evening of Jan. 20, you would attempt to prove "Unitarianism a perversion of the Gospel." This is the occasion of my writing you.

I am glad to find that a young man of your education and probable expectations, has had courage and sincerity to avow your renunciation of the heart-withering system of Calvinism, for the more benevolent and more purifying scheme of Universalism.

I, too, *was* and *am* a Universalist; but I have added to my belief of the Divine Benevolence, that of the Divine Unity. I hope, therefore, you will think me justified in expressing a wish to be acquainted with the evidence which proves Unitarianism a perversion of the Gospel. If you can show me that Unitarianism is a perversion of the Gospel, I will renounce it and believe the Trinity. I write to request that you will publicly, and openly, and not in a corner discuss with me the question—Whether Unitarianism *be* a perversion of the Gospel? I trust, my dear Sir, that you will have no objection to a free discussion of this great question. You are a learned man, and I am persuaded you will have no objection to show a reason for your belief; you are sincere, I have no doubt, and believe you have truth on your side, you will not therefore quail; for truth never shuns inquiry, but courts it, and

"Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just."

I have other reasons for inviting you to this discussion. I address 3 or 400 persons every Sunday; according to your view, I address to them "a perversion of the Gospel." Now, Sir, if you will be so obliging as bring forth your strong reasons, you may bring me to see the error of my sentiments, and thus save 3 or 400 human souls from weekly perversion. If you decline this discussion, I must ask, where is your ardour for the salvation of man? where is your zeal for the diffusion of truth?

But, farther, had I announced publicly that I would prove Universalism a perversion of the Gospel, and had my excellent friend, Mr. Scott,\* expressed a desire to be informed of that process of reasoning which was to destroy the dear cherished Universalism of his heart, I do not think that I would be justified in declining Mr. Scott's challenge. I had said that his faith was a perversion of the Gospel, and I was bound to prove it. You have done this in regard to Unitarianism, and you are bound to prove it.

For myself, I am ready to examine the doctrines of the Trinity and the Deity of Jesus Christ with any believer in those doctrines. I have challenged and I do challenge any clergyman or any layman in Greenock, to prove in debate with me the Deity of Jesus Christ; and as the venerable and excellent N. Douglas challenged all the clergy of Greenock to dispute with him on the merits of Universalism, so I wish you Mr. Taylor to understand, that no person will in Greenock placard Unitarianism as a perversion of the Gospel, without a similar invitation from me.

My sole object is to obtain your consent to a free discussion, persuaded as I am, that Unitarianism, of any prevailing system known to me, is the nearest approach to primitive simple Christianity. If you will come and show that Unitarianism is a perversion of the Gospel, my pulpit shall be gladly opened to you. I will do all in my power to circulate the intelligence that you are going to refute Unitarianism. Do, I beseech you, show us the truth, since you are in possession of it. Or will you grant me the liberty of being present in the Buck's Head Hall, and refuting your refutation of Unitarianism? If neither of these proposals pleases you, say in what place and manner, and at what time you wish the discussion to be carried on. I will agree to any thing that is public.

You and I, Sir, have pursued a similar course. We have both surrendered good prospects in the Church of Scotland, preferring truth with a good conscience, to what we deemed error with the salary of an Establishment. Candour and free inquiry will conduct you to Unitarianism. Over all the world with a very few exceptions, Universalism is the sister of Unitarianism. This is fact, not assertion. I shall not be surprised if you should come to perceive as I did, that though the Trinity and the Deity of Jesus Christ may appear to have the support of a few passages, yet the general run of Scripture is unequivocally in favour of One Only God the Father, and that Jesus Christ was really and truly one of the human race—a man.

I am, my dear Sir, with good will and wishes for the farther progress of your inquiries.

A. MACDONALD.

GREENOCK, Jan. 19, 1833.

P. S. I have obtained the consent of our Committee to offer you the use of the Unitarian Chapel on any Sunday morning which may suit your convenience; my observations on your discourse to follow on the evening of the same day.

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\* One of the Preachers of Universalism in Greenock.—*Edit.*

*Sunday-School Union.*—At a meeting of the Teachers of the Sunday-schools attached to the congregations in Worship-Street, Coles-Street, and Spicer-Street, London, held at Coles-Street, August 9th, 1833, the Rev. R. K. Philp in the Chair, the following resolutions were passed:—

I. That an Union be formed between the three Schools, the Teachers of which are now present.

II. That this Union be for the purpose of mutual information, encouragement, and assistance.

III. That for these purposes, a quarterly meeting of the Teachers be held on the first Sundays in January, April, July, and October, at such place and hour as from time to time may be deemed convenient.

IV. That a Fund be formed by Donations and Subscriptions from schools and individuals, for the purpose of publishing any works for use in Sunday-schools, which may seem to be called for; and for carrying into effect, in any way, the purposes of this Union.

V. That a Secretary and Treasurer be appointed to transact the business of the Union, under the direction of the quarterly meeting.

VI. That a special general meeting be called by the Secretary, at the requisition of any two Teachers of the Schools connected with the Union.

VII. That a general meeting be held on some convenient day in the Summer of each year, when reports shall be read of the progress and prospects of each School connected with the Union, and also a general report of the state of the Union.

VIII. That a Special Committee be appointed by the quarterly or general meeting, to transact any business which may call for greater attention than ordinary.

IX. That, as the extension of this Union is highly desirable, other Schools be invited to join it.

X. That each School connected with the Union, shall contribute annually a sum of not less than Five Shillings.

XI. That Mr. William Newton Coupland, of 15, Globe-Road, Mile-End, be elected Secretary to this Union.

XII. That Mr. Robert Green, of 42, Whitechapel Road, be elected Treasurer to this Union.

XIII. That the Secretary be requested to have copies of the resolutions now entered into, printed, and sent to the Editors of the different Unitarian periodicals.

XIV. That the cordial thanks of this Meeting be given to Mr. Philp for his able and impartial conduct in the Chair this evening, and for his general attention to the interests of Sunday-schools.

15, GLOBE ROAD MILE END.

W. N. COUPLAND, SEC.

AUGUST 2, 1833.—Died at Hull, after an illness of a few hours, aged 62 years, Mr. W. Darley, late of Thorne, Yorkshire. The practice which most religious communities have adopted, of recording the decease of their principal members, is both natural

and becoming; and when (as in the present instance) the individual has been distinguished by uprightness of character, strength of intellect, and perseverance in a course of extensive usefulness, an important moral lesson may be derived from a brief record of his life and character. The subject of the present notice was born of respectable parents, but in no elevated rank of society. At an early age he entered on the active business of a commercial life, and in consequence did not enjoy the advantages of an early scholastic education. He soon, however, displayed the superiority which the high endowments of nature are almost sure to confer when (as in him) they are accompanied with integrity of principle, and directed by a spirit of persevering industry. The consequence was, that he fully succeeded in elevating himself to a station that may justly be regarded high in every sense of the word. By a successful career of commercial enterprise, he accumulated extensive wealth, which he carefully employed as the means of public usefulness. To his intimate friends it was well known, that he regarded every increase of worldly property, as entailing upon him an additional responsibility, and that he felt grateful, not only on account of his being thus enabled to increase the comforts and importance of his family, but also that he was rendered instrumental in furnishing the means of profitable employment to numerous dependents, and of essentially promoting the benefit of the general community. What is more, no increase of wealth or consequence had any influence in altering the original simplicity of his manners, or in estranging him from any of his early friends; nor did the commercial contests in which he engaged ever prevent him from displaying a lively and benevolent interest in the success of any honourable competitor. By attentively availing himself of every means of acquiring practical knowledge, he equally succeeded in the acquisition of mental treasures. His extensive commercial connections naturally enabled him to gain a considerable knowledge of the world and of human nature. His taste for intellectual inquiries led him to cultivate the acquaintance of men of information and habits of thought; while the clearness of his perception; and the practical shrewdness of his mind, caused him to acquire so ample a store of information, and to appreciate so correctly its real importance, that few enjoyed the pleasure of his society, without receiving as much instruction, as they were able to communicate. His enlightened spirit of patriotism, and his constant readiness to promote any measure for the public benefit, made him an important member of society; and the influence he possessed in the district where he resided, was steadily exerted in the cause of constitutional liberty, for the extension of useful knowledge, and to promote the benefit of suffering humanity. The religious sentiments in which he had been originally trained, were of the character usually called orthodox. He has, however, often declared, that from the first period of his exerting the power of independent thought, he entertained doubts of the perfect soundness of these sentiments, and while young he was led to adopt the simple and efficacious faith of a Unitarian Christian. These views he im-

bibed from attending the services and perusing the writings of the Rev. Richard Wright, who was at that time employed by the Unitarian Fund, and who under the auspices of that valuable institution, laid the foundation of the Unitarian congregation at Thorne, the place of Mr. Darley's nativity and usual abode. Of this congregation, he continued to the period of his death a consistent and valuable member. He felt the importance of his religious principles in serving to give stability to his Christian faith, their value in promoting integrity of character, and the power which they possess to support and cheer the soul. He felt it, too, as a duty he owed to his Maker, openly to profess and zealously to support the system of religious faith he had adopted, and was powerfully convinced that the intellectual, political, and moral improvement of society depended materially on the extension of the sentiments of Unitarian Christianity.

His death will long be sincerely deplored by an extensive circle of acquaintance, among whom he always proved himself a pleasing and intelligent companion, and a kind and faithful friend. The Unitarian congregations at Thorne and Stainforth, will especially feel the loss of this zealous and valuable member of their body. And the inhabitants of Thorne will long remember him as a public spirited townsman, a sympathising neighbour, and an upright and benevolent man. The writer of this article enjoyed for several years the benefit and pleasure of his society, and though recently called to a distant scene of action, feels sensibly the loss he has sustained in the death of so valuable a friend. He ventures, however, to suggest to the numerous individuals who share in this feeling, the benefit that may be derived from contemplating the character of their departed friend, with a firm resolution of cultivating his virtues and following his example. The summons of death was in his case appallingly sudden, but it was received with dignified and Christian calmness. A previous attack of illness had prepared him for a sudden call, and his strong and well-regulated mind was never heedless of the warnings of Providence. May we all be found equally prepared, seeing none of us knows what even a day may bring forth.

STOCTON-ON-TREES.

W. D.

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AUGUST 13, 1833.—Died at Thorne, Yorkshire, aged 39 years, Susan, the wife of Mr. C. Darley; only son of the above.

In her a second severe loss has been sustained in the same family and by the same congregation. She was remarkable for the cheerfulness of her temper, the activity with which she discharged her duties, the kind affability of her manners, the strength of her affection for her family, and the cordiality of her friendships. Few were more ready than she to promote the interests of any institution of a benevolent character, or to show sympathy toward private suffering and distress. The benevolence of her disposition, and the importance of her life, did not, however, save her from the universal doom. May her death serve as an additional warning of the uncertainty of all sublunary possessions.

W. D.

Rev. Israel Wersley, late of Paris, has accepted the charge of the congregation with which he was formerly connected at Lincoln.

Rev. Jerome Murch of Diss, has succeeded the Rev. Joseph Hunter of Bath, who has been appointed one of the Commissioners of Public Records.

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THE letter from Mr. Samuel Tucker, though dated 15th June, did not reach us till the close of August. We readily give it insertion. It will of course be noticed in a future Number.

Our friends in various parts of England, are respectfully informed, that their communications for this Magazine, if sent to the care of MR. HUNTER, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, LONDON, *previously to the last day of every Month*, will reach the Editor in a few days afterwards.

In looking over the stock of our past Numbers; we find the greatest difference occurs in those at the beginning and close of the year. The Magazine commenced in September, and each Volume has closed in August. As it is usual, however, for most periodicals to begin and end with January and December, we shall carry on the present Volume to December; and commence the *eighth* Volume with January 1834.

The stock of early Numbers being heavy, the *first* and *second* Volumes are offered at Two Shillings and Sixpence each. Single Volumes to complete sets, at Four Shillings; and the set of Six Volumes at one Guinea. Single Numbers to complete past Volumes at Fourpence-halfpenny.

Of the Volume now publishing, a sufficient quantity is printed to supply Subscribers only, their number having now been ascertained.

THE  
**CHRISTIAN PIONEER.**

No. 87.      NOVEMBER, 1833.      Vol. VII.

*Scottish Unitarian Christian Association.*

ON Sunday and Monday, September 29 and 30, the Third Anniversary of this Institution since its re-establishment, was held at Glasgow. In the morning of Sunday, Rev. J. Scott Porter of Belfast, conducted the worship, and Rev. Dr. Drummond of Dublin preached a most interesting and beautiful discourse on the Scriptural representations of the character of God, from Mat. vii. 9-11.

The whole service in the afternoon was taken by Mr. Porter, who admirably exposed the baselessness of the argument, of numbers being a test of truth, from Acts v. 38, 39. In the evening Mr. Harris prayed, and Dr. Drummond preached from John viii. 31, 32, powerfully urging the importance and the duty of earnestly inquiring after and manfully professing Christian truth. The Chapel throughout the day was crowded by a deeply interested audience; friends being present from Dundee, Dunfermline, Tillicoultry, Old Lanark, New Lanark, Kirkfield Bank, Carlisle, Davies Dykes, Bellshill, Dalry, Cruthersland, Paisley, Renfrew, Saltcoats, Largs, Innerkip, Greenock, Port Glasgow, Dumbarton, Old Kilpatrick, Old Cumnock, Peebles, &c. The collection was £14 : 8 : 5.

At the conclusion of the morning worship, the Report of the Committee of the Association was read by the Secretary, Mr. Harris. It is as follows:—

“The Committee of the Scottish Unitarian Christian Association, in presenting their *Third* Report to its members and friends, congratulate them on the altered and improving circumstances in which they assemble at this Anniversary. In giving an account of their stewardship, it will be seen, they hope, that every effort has been made which the means at their disposal enabled them to employ, for the promotion of the great and important objects of the Institution committed to their charge. Having in the two preceding Annual Reports entered fully into the reasons which called for the formation of the Association, and detailed at considerable length the obstacles which



would impede the accomplishment of its objects, as well as the encouragements which would cheer on its labours, the Committee come at once to a relation of their proceedings during the past year, dividing the portions of their Report according to the *five* respective purposes of the Association.

I. Correspondence for mutual encouragement and aid in the promotion of the sacred and benevolent principles of their common faith, has been continued with Aberdeen, Auchterarder, Tillicoultry, Edinburgh, Greenock, Paisley, Dundee, Blackford, Falkirk, Carlisle, Kilmarnock, Port-Glasgow, Saltcoats, Dumbarton, Dumblane, Grahamstown, Lanark, Old Cumnock, Monkland, Dalry, Beith, and Irvine, and has been commenced with the following additional places to those enumerated in former Reports,—Hamilton, Bannockburn, Dreghorn, Innerleithen, Alloa, Catrine, and Dunfermline. Letters have been received from several individuals and congregations to which your attention will be directed in the course of this Report.

II. There was on hand at the last Anniversary 1142 books and tracts. There have been added to the stock in the course of the year, by purchase and exchange, 605 copies of publications in advocacy and illustration of the principles of Christian Unitarianism; making a total of 1747. Of these there have been claimed by subscribers in their annual allotments, 109—exchanged with the Edinburgh congregation for copies of Mr. Stannus's sermon on the wanderings of Christendom from Gospel simplicity, 189—sold to various individuals, 109—given to Kilmarnock friends as a foundation for a congregational library, and for general circulation, 61—to the Glasgow congregation for lending out during the winter evening lectures, 66—to the friends at Dunfermline, 85—and there have been distributed by your Missionary and the Secretary 121 publications, making together 740, and leaving at present in possession of the Association 1007, value £14 : 6 : 11.

III. The Committee have to notice with unfeigned satisfaction, the indefatigable labours of their respected Missionary, Rev. Henry Clarke. His zeal and energy have been unabated. Even during a period in the past year, which must to him have been truly afflictive, and in the circumstances of which they sincerely sympathised—his devotedness to the great work in which he is en-

gaged, was unwearied: Having heard from the various stations at which he had laboured during the first year of his engagement with the Association, urging the renewal of it (with the exception of one Society, Paisley, which from peculiar circumstances was obliged to discontinue its subscription, being called on to make pecuniary efforts for the liquidation of the burden on its place of worship), the Committee unanimously re-invited the Missionary.

They were happy in Mr. Clarke's acceptance of the invitation; and the account of his labours during the past year, which will now be submitted to you, shows the importance of the office he sustains, and its great utility in spreading abroad the knowledge and practice of enlightened and Scriptural worship.

*To the Committee of the Scottish Unitarian Association.*

GENTLEMEN,—The report of my missionary labours since the last Anniversary Meeting, I present to you with the mingled feelings of pleasure, regret, and hope. I derive pleasure from a review of what has been accomplished; I feel regret that more has not been effected; and I entertain hope in the onward progress and final triumph of the holy cause—the cause of Christian truth and heavenly love which we espouse. Long experience had taught me, not to be too sanguine in my expectations. From my own theological thralldom and subsequent emancipation, and my intimate acquaintance with numerous cases similar to my own, I had too well learned how inveterate are early religious impressions—how gigantic are long-settled habits of thinking—and how potent are the influences of worldly fashion, to permit myself to calculate very largely upon the early visible effects which my humble exertions would produce. I was fully aware that the aspect of the land in which bigotry is piled on bigotry, lofty as its mountains, and prejudice and superstition are poured forth plentiful as its floods, is not to be changed in a day or a year. But the Divine Teacher who was sent from God, has declared, that “If we have faith as a grain of mustard seed, the mountains shall be removed;” and then, too, the floods shall be restrained, and the land made to smile under the influences of our Heavenly Father's love, and yield abundantly the fruits of fraternal affection. Aided by the power, and comforted by the spirit, and animated by the utility of this faith from above, I have been enabled to hold on my way, trusting in God, and endeavouring to spread what we believe to be “the truth as it is in Jesus;” and I now place before you a general view of my labours.

During the period which has elapsed since my last report, I have continued to visit all the places excepting one at the same intervals, and upon the same plan as during the preceding year. But it will be seen that my attention has also been directed towards several new places.

**Carlisle** has been visited as heretofore twice a-month. I have accordingly officiated at this place twenty-four Sabbaths, and delivered fifty-four discourses. In the course of the year I have administered the Lord's Supper twice, and had on the first occasion forty communicants, and on the last forty-seven. The attendance on public worship has been uniformly good. In the neighbourhood of Carlisle, I have delivered the following number of occasional lectures:—at Davies Dykes, one; at Wishawtown, one; at New Lanark two; and at Old Lanark six. Some of these were delivered to large audiences, although others were but thinly attended. The obstacles to the extension of religious sentiments differing materially from those which are commonly promulgated, are here, as elsewhere, both numerous and formidable; but it is encouraging to observe, that an evident advance has been made in this district, of the great principles of Gospel truth and Christian charity. Such principles must continue to acquire strength, and more and more extend.

**Paisley** was at the time of my last report visited once a-month. These monthly visits I continued till the end of February, when the Paisley friends found it necessary to make such alterations in their plans, as rendered their connection with the Missionary department of the Association no longer practicable. Up to the period when this connection ceased, I visited Paisley six times, and delivered seventeen discourses, and one in the adjoining village of Johnstone. Since February our friends in this district have proceeded without the assistance of missionary preaching, and no doubt they will furnish a statement of their present condition and prospects.

**Kilmarnock** has been visited by me nine times since my last report. In the course of these visits, I have preached in this town twenty-five times, and held three public discussions. For a period the attendance on public religious services were, in consequence of some local circumstances, and the death of a zealous, active individual, but thin; yet the discussions on the Trinity seem to have excited considerable attention and inquiry, and the number of persons who attended the services of the last Sabbath, exceeded most of the preceding days. The discussions have been very much crowded, especially the last, which was an examination of the Scripture doctrine respecting the person and powers of our Saviour. Opposition of the most violent kind has been offered to the spread of our views, and methods the most disgraceful have been resorted to, and means the most unfair employed to destroy our cause in its infancy; but Scriptural truth, Christian philanthropy, and Evangelical simplicity, have evinced themselves too potent for misrepresentation and bigotry.

In the neighbourhood of Kilmarnock I have visited and preached at Dreghorn once, and Irvine twice, and held several religious conversations with Unitarians and inquirers after truth in some other places. Books and tracts explanatory of our religious sentiments have been pretty extensively circulated in this district, and they continue to be in request. When it is considered that not many more than twenty months have elapsed since the first pro-

freely. Unitarian sermons were preached in Kilmarnock—that the total number of visits amounts to but fifteen—that we were soon deprived by death of the friend on whom we mainly relied—and that the utmost exertions have been made to deter persons from attending our meetings—it is far from being matter of surprise that those who openly avow Unitarian Christianity are not numerous. But these remain unscathed, and invite their townsmen to fair examination, and look confidently forward to the increase of their numbers.

Tillicoultry has received ten visits from me, and I have by these been enabled to deliver twenty-nine discourses, and administer the Lord's Supper twice. On the first of these occasions there were fourteen communicants, and on the last twenty-one. The friends here were for a time without a suitable place in which to hold their meetings, but through the kindness of one of the members, a space in a newly-erected mill has been appropriated to that purpose, and there they now comfortably assemble. In the neighbourhood of Tillicoultry, I have lectured twice at Alva, once at Alloa, and once at Sauchey; besides this, on my return from these places, I have lectured three times at Bannockburn. At all these places there are a few Unitarians, and there is good reason to anticipate that ere long there will be more.

On the 30th of December I went for the first time to the town of Dunfermline, to which I had been invited by a few persons who had recently discarded Trinitarianism, for the very serious reason, that they could not find it in the Bible. Large audiences attended on the services of the day. Three weeks subsequently, Mr. Harris followed up my efforts, by proceeding to Dunfermline, and preaching to the people, and forming a Society. Since that period, this new church has been visited by myself four times, by Mr. Stannus once, Mr. Harris once, and Mr. Macdonald once. I have delivered sixteen discourses in this town, and one in the neighbouring village of Brucefield. On the 12th of August I held a public discussion on the doctrine of the Trinity, and on the 6th of September Mr. Macdonald held another, on the Deity of Christ, and on both occasions the place of meeting was crowded to excess. The members of the Society have gone on gradually increasing, and there is now every rational ground to consider the cause of Christian Unitarianism as established in Dunfermline on a permanent basis, and to believe, that notwithstanding the violent resistance which has been, and probably will repeatedly be offered, to that sacred cause, it will yet maintain the advantages which it has acquired, and ultimately prevail.

Besides the before-named places, I have also paid one visit to Hamilton, and preached twice to large congregations. If to these labours be added my exchanges with Messrs. Stannus, Harris, and Macdonald, the sum total of my Missionary operations may be thus stated:—84 visits made to 22 places, at which 181 discourses have been delivered, and 4 public discussions conducted; and to accomplish which, I have travelled 2,300 miles, mostly on foot.

On several occasions I have lectured in the open air, on the

subject of Church Establishments; and I have also delivered the same, and similar lectures, within doors. To this course I have been urged by the solemn conviction, that our views of God's dealings, Christ's doctrines, and men's duties and destinies, require us not only to advocate Voluntary Church principles, but to carry on those views to their only legitimate consequence, that of rejecting all human authority in matters of religion, and acting as the freemen of Christ, and the worshippers of the One God and Father of all. To impress my fellow men with the truths, that Jesus alone is our spiritual Master—that his Father and our Father is the only true God—that all men are brethren—that Christianity is a system of liberty, light, and love—and that those who are labouring to attain and diffuse virtue, spiritual-mindedness, and true self-respect, are labouring most efficiently to secure present and eternal happiness—has been the paramount aim, and the soul's desire of, Gentlemen, Your devoted Missionary,

HENRY CLARKE.

The Committee are persuaded they only speak a language which will be responded to by every individual present, when they lament the inadequate support they can give to so unwearied a labourer. Happy will they be should increased aid from the subscribers and friends to the Institution put it in the power of the future officers of the Association to accomplish what all must desire, the more suitable remuneration of their Missionary. That happiness will be still more increased should they be enabled to avail themselves of the aid of another labourer, Mr. M'Kean, from the effect of whose pleadings in behalf of Christian truth and righteousness in Paisley, they augur much good could they be more extensively diffused.

IV. The Committee have been particularly interested in the circumstances which led to the open profession of Christian Unitarianism at Dunfermline, by some individuals, the history of whose change from Calvinism to Scriptural light, affords another instance that knowledge is of power to break the strongest fetters of prejudice—that pure philosophy is the handmaid to undefiled Christianity—and that there is a harmony in nature, Providence, and the Gospel, which must eventually strike the most benighted devotee of the common theology, that conviction itself becoming the means of ushering its recipient into the glorious liberty of a child of God. In the report of the Missionary, it has been stated, that a congregation has been formed at Dunfermline. The difficulties with which this infant Church has had to combat, have been great and trying; every species of misrepres-

sentation has been employed to prevent its establishment, but that misrepresentation has only excited further inquiry; several persons have joined the congregation who were previously unknown to the individuals who originated it, and the result from the judgment and integrity of its members cannot but be good.

At the earnest solicitation of the friends at Aberdeen, the Committee intend to avail themselves of the visit of Mr. Macdonald to his native city, and have requested him to preach on the Sundays during his stay; earnestly hoping with their respected correspondent in that place, that his labours may "ultimately end in a respectable Unitarian Congregation being formed in this, the northern metropolis of Scotland." They are happy to announce that Mr. Macdonald has promptly acceded to their wishes.

V. The Committee of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, in testimony of the interest they take in the proceedings of this Association, and as an expression of their sympathy and good wishes for the accomplishment of its objects, have transmitted twenty pounds in aid of its efforts. From the Fellowship Fund of the Gravel-Pit Meeting, Hackney, five pounds have been received, and the Liverpool Joint Fellowship Fund has, without any renewed application from your Committee, repeated its former grant of five pounds. The cordial and heartfelt thanks of the Unitarians of Scotland are tendered for these generous donations.

The Committee now request your attention to the Reports from the following places and Congregations.

[In **INVINE**, **KILWINNING**, **DALRY**, **SALTCOATS**, **DREGHORN**, **CARRINE**, **OLD CUMNOCK**, there are individual believers in Christian Unitarianism—inquiry is made for Unitarian books—and less bigotry is manifested towards these principles.—At **DUMBARTON** and its neighbourhood, in consequence of the circulation of the *Christian Pioneer* and other works, the number of believers in God's Unity and benevolence is increasing. This district presents a good field for the exertions of a missionary.—In **FALKIRK** the established clergyman is putting forth his utmost power to undo all that his predecessor, Rev. Dr. Wilson, did for Christian charity; but the very excess of his bigotry and Calvinism is inducing inquiry.—**KILMARNOCK** friends express an earnest desire for the continuance of Missionary visits, a desire in which they are joined by correspondents in several surrounding villages. An impression has been made, inquiry has been called forth, a member of the Baptist congregation has lately been excommunicated for the denial of Christ's deity, and much eagerness is shown to read Unitarian publications.

"Paisley has lately received some new ministers to her Established Churches. They are young, fiery zealots—and have marshalled all their forces: funds have been raised—town missionaries have been employed—numerous places for their worship have been opened—permanent Sunday evening sermons have been established—and little publications have been thrust gratuitously into every house. In these publications, they have modestly assumed to be the stated 'ambassadors of Christ,' and with Evangelical humility have affirmed their ability to preach a 'fuller and clearer revelation,' than did the Saviour to the Jews. After thus seating themselves in the Cardinal Chair, and laying claim to superior inspiration, they indiscriminately classed Unitarianism, infidelity, and reckless profanity together, and charged them as the causes of the distress, ignorance, demoralization, and irreligion of the inhabitants of Paisley! The Unitarian congregation, in self-defence, published an address to their townsmen; and, under the superintendence of the Rev. G. Harris of Glasgow, a course of Sabbath evening lectures was arranged and conducted with great ability; and they were attended by a considerable number of strangers from both town and country. Tracts on Christian Unitarianism were lent out at the close of each lecture, and although they were not eagerly sought after, yet a considerable number were circulated, so that a more correct knowledge of our sentiments was spread amongst the community, and some persons were convinced of the truth of our views. The lectures gave great satisfaction to those who heard them; and at the close of the course, the Unitarian congregation unanimously passed a vote of thanks to the Rev. G. Harris, for the friendly zeal with which he undertook the management of the lectures, and respectfully tender him their warmest wishes for his prosperity, both as a pastor and as a private individual. At the same time, they voted thanks to the Rev. H. Clarke and A. Macdonald, Messrs. Wells, Lloyd, Cooper, and M'Kean, regretting their inability to remunerate them for their disinterested and valuable services—congratulating them on the eminent talent and ability displayed, which they take as an earnest of yet increasing labours and success in the cause of truth and the advancement of man. They affectionately assure them, that their gratitude will follow them to every scene of their usefulness, and that their success will ever inspire them with joy.

"Since the course of lectures closed, Mr. M'Kean has continued his interesting, instructive, energetic, eloquent services on the first Sabbath of every month; and that they are appreciated, abundantly appears by the increased and increasing audiences that he attracts. Our highest praise falls short of his merit, and our warmest thanks are but poor returns for his splendid exertions.

"We have also been favoured with the opening services of Mr. Maceall, and while we lament Mr. Macdonald's departure to the South, we congratulate our Greenock brethren on the intelligence and talent of his successor, by whom we were highly gratified, and the excellence of whose first ministrations assures us that he

will be enabled to maintain and forward the glorious cause. We wish him God speed."

At GREENOCK, "although the congregation may not have increased much in numbers during the past year, it has acquired a more steady and respectable form; in particular, many *families* now attend regularly. There are a few persons, not connected with our Society, disposed to free inquiry on religious subjects; but the majority of the population, impelled, no doubt, by the overwhelming influence of the late changes in the Government, devote most of their spare moments to inquiry and discussions on politics. The spirit of bigotry is declining, particularly amongst the working classes. We have heard, however, of one or two instances of master tradesmen turning away their servants, principally, if not solely, for having dared to attend the Unitarian Chapel. Other small tradesmen, on their own account, have urged intimidation from employers and customers as a reason for withdrawing from our worship. In the former part of the year, the Orthodox pulpits, established and dissenting, were incessant in their fulminations against Unitarianism; but latterly they have *simultaneously* *hung fire*, whether owing to the masterly castigation inflicted on one or two of their orators by Mr. Macdonald, through the medium of the press, or the manifest disgust of their own hearers, we have not the means of ascertaining.

"Yesterday (Sept. 22) closed the labours of our talented and bold young pastor, Mr. Macdonald, to whose zeal for truth, and manly candour in avowing it, amidst much clamour, obloquy, and opposition, we are indebted for the formation of the first Unitarian Society in Greenock. Many amongst us were most enthusiastically attached to him; and the parting on both sides was not without tears. But, thank God, as there was 'a Paul to plant so there was an Apollos to water,' and we can assure the young gentleman now coming amongst us from the folds of Orthodoxy, that he will be received with all affection and kindness."

"The EDINBURGH Congregation has increased very considerably during the last two years. Notwithstanding an unprecedented number of deaths and removals which have occurred during that time, all the gaps have been supplied; and in addition to this, the ordinary attendance at public worship has been doubled. In the six months which have elapsed since the termination of the Sunday evening lectures given by Mr. Stannus last winter, there has been a larger accession of new members than in any similar period in the history of the Congregation.

"These favourable circumstances are chiefly to be imputed to the zeal, talent, and popularity of the Minister of the congregation, whose unremitting exertions have not only earned for him the merited approbation of his own regular hearers, but have attracted the attention of many inquiring persons of other religious persuasions, and of some to whom Christianity itself had previously appeared repulsive, in consequence of its being confounded with those formularies of faith of human invention, by which the religious education of the inhabitants of this country is so generally regulated.



“ From the above facts, as well as from the frequent demands for the perusal of Unitarian books and tracts, and from the uniformly respectful manner in which Unitarian arguments and expositions are listened to, the Committee hope they may be permitted to infer that the spirit of bigotry, though still unhappily too prevalent, is yielding to the influence of education, of free inquiry, and of Scriptural truth; and that they may also be justified in indulging very sanguine hopes of the future prosperity and firm establishment of their own religious society. Till this object is thoroughly accomplished, the Committee think that the Edinburgh congregation will most effectually serve the cause of truth, by concentrating all their efforts for its attainment, under the conviction that by the establishment of a flourishing Unitarian Society in this great emporium of education, they will contribute more powerfully than they could in any other manner to the general diffusion of enlightened views of the religion of Jesus Christ.”

“ The Committee of the GLASGOW Unitarian Congregation have great pleasure in the return of an Anniversary on which they again assemble with their friends and brethren from various parts of their common country, to bear their testimony to Christian liberty and God's benevolence, and to unite with them in pouring forth their thanksgivings in the name of Jesus, to the One Jehovah, the Father of mercies, the Source of every blessing. They are happy in being able to state, that the affairs of their particular congregation are going on with undiminished improvement. The institutions connected with it continue to be supported with zeal, and to extend in usefulness. The Congregational Library contains upwards of five hundred volumes on the most important topics connected with theology and general literature; the average number of readers and subscribers being about seventy, by whom eight hundred and seventeen volumes have been taken out during the course of the past year.—The means adopted to increase the interest and usefulness of the Benevolent Society for the relief of the sick and poor of the congregation have been successful, and its funds were never in a more satisfactory condition.

“ The congregation, anxious to liquidate the debt, £1180, which rests on their place of worship, have set on foot a Fellowship Fund, for the purpose of its gradual payment, the subscribers to which, at a halfpenny and upwards a-week, amount to nearly two hundred. Their contributions, with the aid they hope to receive from all interested in the firm and prosperous establishment of their Society, will, they trust, in the course of a few years enable them to remove a burden which at present clogs their efforts, and thus place at their disposal the means of more widely disseminating the holy and benevolent views in which they have peace and joy in believing.

“ Death, in the course of the past year, has called away some of their warmest friends; but upwards of fifty new subscribers have during the same period joined the congregation, several of whom have families. A spirit of rational and Scriptural inquiry is spreading—bigotry is declining—and many circumstances are at present occurring in this city highly favourable to the advance-

ment of the doctrines and worship of the Gospel of Christ, of which they are confident their Pastor will avail himself in the course of Sunday evening lectures he is about to commence; and which they are persuaded will issue in the diffusion of knowledge and charity, and in many others joining themselves in the offering of that pure and sole adoration to the Great Father of all, of which the Saviour gave both the solemn precept and the hallowed example, and which, in obedience to both, they feel it their duty and their happiness cheerfully and gratefully to offer in his name and as his disciples.”]

The Treasurer's Report will now be read:—

1832.

# RECEIPTS.

|                                                                                |                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| August 1.—Balance in hand, .....                                               | £ 0 12 11       |
| Collection at Anniversary, after deducting usual Chapel }<br>Collection, ..... | 14 14 1½        |
| Subscriptions from Dalry, and Arrears, .....                                   | 0 10 0          |
| Do. Rev. C. Wicksteed, Liverpool, .....                                        | 0 10 6          |
| Do. Dundee, and Arrears, .....                                                 | 1 0 0           |
| Do. Lanark, .....                                                              | 0 10 0          |
| Do. Dumbarton, .....                                                           | 0 13 0          |
| Do. Greenock, .....                                                            | 0 15 0          |
| Do. Saltcoats, .....                                                           | 1 4 0           |
| Do. Edinburgh, .....                                                           | 2 1 6           |
| Do. Dunfermline, .....                                                         | 5 0 0           |
| Do. Kilmarnock, .....                                                          | 5 3 6           |
| Do. Tillicoultry, .....                                                        | 10 0 0          |
| Do. Paisley, and Arrears, .....                                                | 11 6 9          |
| Do. Glasgow, .....                                                             | 16 0 0          |
| Do. Carlisle, .....                                                            | 20 10 0         |
| Donation from Hackney Fellowship Fund, .....                                   | 5 0 0           |
| Do. Liverpool Fellowship Fund, .....                                           | 5 0 0           |
| Do. British and Foreign Unitarian Association, .....                           | 20 0 0          |
| Discount off Tracts, .....                                                     | 1 3 5           |
| Tracts Sold, .....                                                             | 3 4 5           |
| Balance against the Association, 31st July, 1833, .....                        | 1 1 2½          |
|                                                                                | <b>£126 0 4</b> |

1832.

# DISBURSEMENTS.

|                                                                                                                   |                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| August 1.—Expenses of Anniversary, .....                                                                          | £ 8 10 6        |
| British and Foreign Unitarian Association, and other }<br>Societies and individuals, for books and tracts, .... } | 8 6 6           |
| Missionary expenses to Messrs. Macdonald, Maccall, & Harris, .....                                                | 6 11 1          |
| Salary of Rev. H. Clarke, .....                                                                                   | 100 0 0         |
| Postages, Parcels, &c. ....                                                                                       | 2 12 3          |
|                                                                                                                   | <b>£126 0 4</b> |

1833.

|                                              |                  |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------|
| August 1.—Subscriptions<br>in Arrears, ..... | £6 7 9           |
| Balance against the Asso-<br>ciation, .....  | 5 4 3½           |
|                                              | <b>£11 12 0½</b> |

1833.

|                                                   |                  |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Aug. 1.—Balance against<br>the Association, ..... | £1 1 2½          |
| Due by the Association, .....                     | 10 10 10         |
|                                                   | <b>£11 12 0½</b> |

Examined and found correct,

JOHN BRAYSON—JOHN DUNLOP.

The Committee cannot close their Report without advert-  
 verting to the loss which their common cause in Scotland  
 is about to sustain in the removal of the Rev. Archibald  
 Macdonald. His open and manly profession of despised  
 and unpopular truth, united with his zealous and un-  
 wearied efforts, have added another congregation to those  
 which previously existed in this country, in which worship  
 is paid in the name of Jesus to the One God and Father  
 of all. His readiness at all times to aid in the diffusion of  
 principles on which are based the improvement and hap-  
 piness of man—his advocacy of human rights—and his  
 efforts to place knowledge within the reach of every in-  
 dividual, have won for him unfeigned esteem and attach-  
 ment. Their best wishes are for his future usefulness  
 and happiness.

Grateful would the Committee be to that benignant  
 Providence which governs everything wisely and well,  
 that the church at Greenock will not be left destitute by  
 the removal of their former minister to England. He  
 will be succeeded by an individual who has given a pledge  
 of his devotedness to truth by his abandonment of the  
 early imbibed convictions of his childhood—who from the  
 Scriptures has learned that God is One—that God is Love  
 —and who, in joining the sect everywhere spoken against,  
 can have no motive but the desire of disseminating what  
 he conscientiously believes to be the pure religion of the  
 Saviour of the world. Welcome is he to our community.  
 Successful and happy be his career!

The Committee close their Report in the hope that their  
 labours will prove acceptable to the Association. They  
 commend those labours, with the friends and subscribers  
 to the Institution, to the blessing of that all-gracious  
 Father whose sole worship they would promote, and  
 whose unrivalled glory all their efforts will be given to  
 advance; convinced as they are, that the improvement  
 and salvation of man is the object of all the dispensations  
 of Heaven, and that the promotion of that improvement  
 —the diffusion of the knowledge of that salvation—is the  
 purest and noblest thanksgiving that can ascend to the  
 Father of lights."

Mr. M'Kean of Glasgow, after a few remarks, moved,  
 and Mr. Simpson of Greenock seconded, the following  
 resolution, which was unanimously adopted:—

"That the Reports now read be received and adopted;

and that the following persons be requested to act as the Committee of the Association for the ensuing year.

|                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Messrs. J. B. Anderson. | Messrs. J. Crawford. |
| James Brock.            | Dunlop.              |
| A. Brownlie.            | Galloway.            |
| J. Bryson.              | Rae.                 |
| J. H. Burn.             |                      |

Mr. NEWTON, *Treasurer.*

Rev. GEORGE HARRIS, *Secretary.*"

ON Monday afternoon, the Subscribers and Friends to the Association assembled in the Saloon of the Argyle Arcade. There were present upwards of three hundred and fifty individuals, male and female. Amidst the acclamations of the company, Mr. HARRIS was appointed President, and JAS. BAIRD, Esq. of Greenock, Vice-president. Mr. Harris opened the meeting with prayer, and after tea offered up thanksgivings to the Father of mercies.

In proposing the first sentiment, "The Scottish Unitarian Christian Association; success to its efforts in the removal of prejudice, intolerance, and error, and the diffusion of truth, liberty, and charity," Mr. Harris dwelt at some length on the beneficent purposes of the meeting—the freedom of spirit which it breathed, the benevolent feeling it inspired—contrasting the common theology with their principles, showing the repugnance of the first to Christianity, and the identification of the last with its pure and holy and blessed truths. [Our desire to report as fully as possible the addresses of the different persons who spoke, induces us to omit in detail the observations of Mr. Harris in conducting this numerous and happy meeting.]

Mr. M'Kean of Glasgow moved the following resolution: "That this Meeting, contrasting the narrowness and gloom and slavery of religious error, with the beneficent, free, and heart-cheering doctrines they believe to be true, would express their sincere satisfaction at the progress those doctrines have made in the past year; and regarding the improving spirit of the age, and the altered circumstances in which they are placed, as demanding from them additional exertions to promote the diffusion of principles on which the happiness of individuals and the improvement of society are dependent, pledge themselves to the adoption of every possible effort for the advancement of their holy and benevolent faith."—Mr. M'Kean, after dwelling on the usefulness of combined exertion in encouraging individual effort, and in more rapidly

advancing a righteous object, sketched in powerful and vivid colours, the contracting and debasing nature of religious error, and then exclaimed

“What a Gospel!—What are the few who are saved, while sin lays waste more terrifically than the irresistible sweep of a thousand tornadoes? What slaves must be the votaries of such a fierce superstition! The gleams of hope so few and far between as only to make the darkness visible, and the evanescent light of its joys no other than a flickering blaze to illuminate the chamber of fear—fear, the dominant motive to action in brute service—fear, which urges to labour where men are under the dominion of the lash—fear, which extinguishes every virtuous aspiration for liberty, and makes man the debased tool of despotism!—yes, fear reigns rampant in all the departments of this cruel theology. Fear of God, fear of the Devil, fear of their own hearts, fear of their understandings, fear of the present, fear of the future, make up but a portion of the terrors of this slavish religion, which leads to darkness or glory as previously settled by an eternal arbitrary decree—terrors from which none are free, save the presumptuous self-elected favourites of Heaven.

Turn we now from this gloomy scene, and as the Lawgiver of Israel ascended Mount Nebo, and from Pisgah's Peak beheld the promised land, so let us survey the glories of the “benevolent, free, and heart-cheering doctrines we believe to be true,” and what a prospect of delight is spread out below! Creation, rich in the beauties of God's unchangeable love, fulfilling his purposes of wisdom, and progressing towards that revolution which shall fold it up as a vesture, and change it into a better and a brighter. Man, the object on whom he has bestowed his most valuable sublunary gifts, endowed with faculties for the perception of his Creator's glories, advancing in intelligence and preparing for another and a nobler state—God's works and ways displayed before him for his education—the volumes of Revelation laid down for his instruction—the discipline of good and evil prepared for experimental training—the relations of life instituted for social culture—and all that is within and without radiating toward that grand centre of attraction, all things in earth and heaven gathered into one in Christ Jesus in the dispensation of the fulness of time.

What a heart-cheering doctrine is this? Not a sparrow falls to the ground but fills up its place in the fulfilment of the plan. Not one mind is illuminated in the knowledge of God our Saviour, that does not minister to its completion. Not a change in the governments of the world—not a throne established in righteousness, nor a tyrant hurled from his seat—not the temporary triumph of an oppressor, nor a sufferer laid on the bed where the wicked cease from troubling—nor any occurrence whatever, cheering or depressing, magnificent or minute, but all, all work together to bring on that glorious age, when creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, while over all God presides in all the unutterable glories of power and wisdom and love, the object of the unreserved adoration of all his freeborn sons.”

**"Pledge we then the honesty of good intentions—pledge we the charity which nature hath implanted, and the Gospel improved—pledge we the benevolence which excludes not one sentient being from our tender regard—pledge we our warmest desires for the glory of God and honour of the Redeemer—pledge we the sweet hope of blissful communion with the purified children of earth, when this mortal shall have put on immortality—and as we seize the cup which sparkles with so sweet a mixture of human excellencies, let us drink, ay drink abundantly of the vivifying draught, till every desire of the soul be embodied into action—may every such action reflect its brightness into the bosoms of others, and be reflected through the long succession of brethren yet unborn, till our Father's house be filled with his offspring, and the banquet of delight be the portion of the dutiful, and serener skies the home of the wandering."**

The resolution was seconded by Rev. William Maccall, who having lately finished his preparatory studies at the University of Glasgow, has left the Secession Church for whose ministry he was intended, and has succeeded Mr. Macdonald as minister to the Unitarian Congregation, Greenock.

Mr. Maccall in seconding the resolution, believed he was not singular in the pleasure he felt in the sentiment which it embodied—declared that if Unitarianism had imparted happiness to their minds, and peace and consolation to their hearts, they were unworthy of its blessedness if they did not strain every nerve to herald its universality—showed in powerful and stirring language the inseparable connection between freedom on one subject, and freedom in all—the favourable influence which political regeneration would have in effecting religious emancipation, and the auspicious aspect of the present times for the advocacy of a pure and enlightened theology. His delineation of the objects of Christ's mission, and the contrast between these objects and the purposes which modern systems of divinity pursued, was most impressive. He thus concluded:—

Is there any Calvinism in nature? When we cast our eyes on the glories, the beauties, and the sublimities of creation—the sun the moon and the stars, the green earth and the blue sky and the mighty ocean, the shaggy forest and the lofty mountain, the sweeping river and the thundering cataract and the flashing lightning—the depth, the power, the intensity of our feelings, throw us on our knees with the irresistible might of an instinct, in adoration of the Being from whom these wonders have sprung. We wait not for nice speculations, profound and elaborate reasonings, or metaphysical inquiries. We adore, because our hearts compel us. The worship to which we are urged by our own

souls, is a simple worship: it is but to express our overflowing gratitude and affection in language as fervid as our feelings. There is no tedious, and mysterious, and inexplicable, and unintelligible process; no quackery, and parade, and delirium; no intoxication of rapture; no madness of ecstasy springing from the dreams, and mistakes, and phantasies of an excited imagination. God is evidently great and good, and all that is required of us is to acknowledge his goodness and his greatness with the love of children and the reverence of creatures.—Is there any Calvinism in nature? When the dawn breaks upon the mountain-tops and reddens into morning, and the beams of the glorious sun burst upon the world, and gild the towering crag, and the tall tree, and the small waves that ripple to the shore; and far away on the bosom of the deep, many a white sail is shining; and on the dewy and glittering grass, the beasts of the field are reposing or leaping in their gladness; and music is gushing from the woods, and the ploughman is seen at his healthful and happy toil, and the blue smoke is rising quietly from the village in the distance, is there any mark of a curse in this gorgeous assemblage?—Is there any Calvinism in nature? Look at this glorious and beautiful world; is there anything to mar its beauty, to tarnish its lustre, to impair its sublimity, to crush its grandeur? Look at it in its highest forms of splendour, and its humblest and minutest forms of loveliness; look at it in all its varieties, in all its wonders, in all its strange and myriad and extraordinary developments, in all its commonnesses, in all its singularities—in all its fixedness, in all its change. Look above, and around, and beneath—grasp the stars, rush through the ocean, pierce the earth—sate the soul with flower, and tree, and forest, and lake, and mountain, and cataract—bathe the spirit in sunshine and summer, in sounds and sights and perfumes—sit beside the gushing fountain, or climb the airy height that overlooks the cataract—wander beside the tiny rill that trickles down a small and gentle declivity, or by the river that traverses a kingdom—contemplate the globes of dew that gem a leaf, or the globes of flame that gem a universe—admire the colours that sparkle on the wings of an insect, or the profusion of glory that blazons on the rainbow that spans the tempest—soar from the gleam of a meteor to the sweep of a comet, from the glitter of the glow-worm to the beam of the moon, from the sparkle of the ignis-fatuus to the flash of the lightning, from the phosphoric glare of the midnight sea to the high and holy light of the galaxy, from the gems that shine in a mine to the magnificent luminary that bathes a clustre of worlds with his radiance,—and then your heart will tell you, with a voice that cannot be quelled nor misunderstood, that man is not so corrupt nor God so malignant as exhibited by the murderer of Servetus.

The resolution having been unanimously adopted, Mr. Harris after giving a rapid outline, of the publications of Dr. Drummond—the character of the Synod to which he belongs—and the history of the Congregation of which he is one of the pastors; and having presented the cordial

thanks of the Association, for the powerful aid he had given to their objects, and the beautiful illustration he had given of their faith, proposed amidst the warmest cheering, "The health of the Rev. Dr. Drummod of Dublin, the worthy successor of Abernethy and of Emlyn."

Dr. Drummond spoke to the following effect:—

To every one who takes an interest in the progress of Unitarian Christianity, which, in our estimation, is the only true and genuine Christianity, it must afford no small gratification to find that its light has at length penetrated into some of the darkest recesses of Calvinism; that in Glasgow a light has arisen to enlighten "those which sat in darkness and in the shadow of death." Strange may it appear, that in a land devoted to the constant reading of the New Covenant, those grand truths which stand emblazoned on its pages in characters of light, should have been for ages so little regarded, or rather so totally overlooked! Strange that the resplendent truth, "To us there is but one God, the Father," should have been so long despised or explained away, while so much zeal was displayed for upholding the doctrine of a *Triune* God, of whom there is in Scripture no mention at all! Strange that Unitarian Christianity has not long since diffused its benignant and vivifying illumination over this land—a land of intellect, of literature, and philosophy! But we can account for the inconsistency. We know the power of error, of prejudice, and of long established opinion. Though the truth be great and must ultimately prevail, its progress may be long retarded by blindness of understanding and hardness of heart, by the passions and interests to which it is opposed, by systems of philosophy, and darling superstitions in religion. Had the true *Protestant principle* been adopted, faithfully adhered to, and acted on, the principle that the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants, we cannot doubt that genuine Christianity would long since have struck a deep root in the soil of Caledonia, and spread a broad and refreshing shade, resembling the little seed of Holy Writ, which at length became a tree, and sheltered the fowls of heaven in its branches. Had the Bible been the only text-book of the people, had it been the only Confession of Faith, the only Larger and Shorter Catechism which they studied, we feel persuaded that Unitarian Christianity ages ago would have had flourishing congregations in this land. But from this principle they have been industriously diverted, and carefully trained to find what they were told were the doctrines of the Bible, not in their own plate where only they should be sought, but in the Westminster Confession. They were taught to believe, that the pure milk of the Word was to be found in that repository, and not a sour concoction of Calvinism and Popery. In questions of doctrine the inquiry was, not what is taught in the Bible—what was the language of the Apostles—what the declarations of the Saviour—but what says the Confession? The doctrines of the Confession were instilled into the minds of the young with the first rudiments of thought, they were enforced by a stern discipline, and of themselves



were calculated to make a fearfully deep and lasting impression. Like an evil root of bitterness, they twined their cancerous fibres round every faculty of the mind and every affection of the heart. The understanding was forbidden the use and enjoyment of its most distinguished privileges. It was bound under the penalty of damnation to lie quiescent, and in chains of an inflexible faith, and the meshes of a net of doctrines, which, like the fabled net of Vulcan, more strongly entangled and compressed the limbs of its victim the more he struggled to be free. Excursive and adventurous in all things else, in the loftier regions of science, in the poetic heaven of inspiration—the mind of Scotland was in divinity cramped, powerless, and inveterate. Her spirit and energy were gone. She lay spell-bound, as under the ban of a cold and withering superstition. Her Confession of Faith seemed to Scotland as the Koran to him who burned the library of Alexandria. It alone, she was taught to believe, contained the true faith. If all that harmonised with it was not superfluous, all that opposed any of its tenets was heretical and ought to be burned! Well may Scotland be proud of her schools, her Universities, her Professors, and men of science; her poets, philosophers, and political economists. Can she be equally proud of her great Divines? We shall not be so rude and uncourteous as to affirm that she cannot. On the contrary, we affirm that she may justly boast of many men of eminent piety and learning, and of many honestly and zealously devoted to all the duties of the Christian vocation. Justly may she boast of a Campbell, a Leechman, a Robertson, and a Blair. The most illustrious of her Divines are those who have been the least zealous for mis-called orthodoxy of opinion, and who held the Westminster Confession in the least respect. If she would do justice to her own mind—if she would rise to that rank in divinity which she is capable of attaining, she must lay aside the beggarly elements of creeds and confessions—she must emancipate herself from the yoke of Calvin—she must assert that freedom is her birth-right, and allow her mind to expand to its full dimensions under the quickening influence of that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.

Is it not marvellous that men of splendid talents and extensive erudition, having the free use of the Bible, should take any other guide in questions of divinity? It is as if we should prefer the smoky flame of a brimstone matchlight to the sun's meridian effulgence. What composition of fallible man can equal the simplicity and clearness of the language of the New Testament? Does not the very idea of a Revelation from God, imply something that is clearly seen and easily understood? And can aught be more clear or more intelligible than the most important doctrines of Scripture? Can we imagine any proposition more plain, than that God is One? or any rule of conduct more comprehensive than that he commands us to do unto all men what we would that they should do unto us? or any tenet of Christianity expressed in a better style than this, "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he who feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him?" Compare a few of these

Scriptural texts with some of the questions and answers of the Westminster Confession, and say which of them speaks the most intelligible language, which of them utters sentiments most worthy of heaven. If the Bible be sufficient (and who in this Bible-reading, or rather Bible-circulating age will deny it?) wherefore annex to it such a monstrous and cumbersome appendage? Is it not virtually to declare it incompetent to its object? Is it not to affirm that one Revelation requires the aid of another—that the second is necessary to explain the first—that man must give a proper finish to the beautiful work of God?—And what man or men, what Conclave, Synod, Council, or General Assembly have any legitimate authority for declaring that their glosses and interpretations of Scripture are true, and paramount to the Scriptures themselves? What is the Westminster Confession, but the composition of frail and fallible, though we doubt not well-meaning men, but men who were still in the purlieus of darkness, and whose vision could not bear the effulgence of Gospel truth? Admitting that they were learned and pious, no one, we presume, will maintain that they were inspired and infallible, and therefore their digest of doctrine has no superior claim to be received. What is the authority that imposes it, but Popery in a different guise, and under a different name?

We shall be told, perhaps, that all their doctrines are fairly deduced from the Scriptures, and proved to a demonstration by its dictates. Were it so, it would be a work of supererogation; but we altogether deny the statement. We maintain, on the contrary, that it is neither in style so plain, nor in doctrine so intelligible—that it mystifies what is clear, and perplexes what is simple. Instead of presenting us with Gospel doctrines in Gospel language, it doles out to us certain propositions of its own manufacture, which it endeavours to prove by garbled texts and fragments of texts of Scripture, taken out of their proper station and forced into a new connection which they disown and repudiate. What opinion may not the Scriptures be made to express by dislocating the original connection of its language, by joining and glueing, by patchwork and dovetailing, and a heterogeneous combination of words and phrases collected from different quarters? A Roman poet and critic asks his friends, if they could refrain from laughing at the junction of a creature formed from the imagination of an artist, who, by combining the limbs of various animals, the limbs of a quadruped and the plumage of a bird, “tongue of newt and toe of frog,” formed the image of a monster, having no resemblance to any thing in nature? Similar seems to be the prowess of certain theologians in constructing some of their doctrines, and not more symmetrical and natural are the images they produce. With one text from Genesis, and a second from Isaiah, and a third from Revelation, they construct doctrines of portentous aspect, and with a grave face exhibit them as fairly copied from Scripture, and challenge for them the same respect and veneration as are due to Scripture itself. The early astronomers and astrologers discovered, as they imagined, the forms of strange animals in the sky. From one bright star to another, they drew certain imaginary lines, with

such curvatures and indentures as suited their purpose, and thus they formed the greater and the lesser bear, "gorgons, and hydras, and chimeras dire." So, from certain points of light in Holy Writ, from a few brilliant or rather obscure texts, do theologians draw their imaginary lines, their inferential curvatures, and form monsters in their theological hemisphere, which they say are clearly visible to the eyes of orthodoxy, though to all others invisible, and baptise them with names peculiar to their own nomenclature, which the Scriptures disown. The sober eye of reason can no more behold their monstrosities of a Trinity in the Bible, than the organs of vision can discover the form of Ophiucus huge, or Taurus or Leo in the starry heavens. There is, however, this difference between the inventions of the astronomer and theologian. Those of the former answered the useful purpose of marking the localities of the stars, they taught the geography of the heavens. But the inventions of theologians only bewilder and perplex the imagination, and lead it away from the bright realities of truth, to pursue the meteors of fiction, or delight in the phantasmagoric images of a semi-Christian, semi-barbarous superstition.

Of those images which they construct, the most prominent and the most admired is that called the Trinity—a Triune God, consisting as they inform us, of three persons in one God. But what can we find in the Scriptures that has any similitude to such a creation as this? We should seek for it rather in the extravagant mythology of the Hindoos, than in the records of a Jewish or a Christian people. When we look to the volume of the great Hebrew Legislator, we read the fundamental principle of the Hebrew religion to be this, "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God, Jehovah is One;" and everything throughout the sacred Scriptures, in reference to the Divine Being, is combined with a recognition of his Unity. Whereas orthodox divines, with all their ingenuity in stitching and dovetailing, cannot find Scriptural language to express their idea of a Triune God. The language of Holy Writ refuses to be made the vehicle of a doctrine which no human ingenuity can preclude from involving that polytheism which Scripture abominates, and robbing Jehovah of his glory. Orthodox divines, as they are pleased to call themselves, are very fond, when it suits their design, of declaring that we ought to adhere with the simple and confiding nature of children to the very words of Scripture, and not explain away their meaning by reasonings and inventions of our own; and yet they are the first to depart from their own rule whenever adherence to it would oppugn or endanger a favourite dogma. We admit the justice and propriety of the rule wherever the language is not figurative, and ask wherefore do they not abide by it? When the Scripture says so repeatedly and so expressly that Jehovah is *One*, why do they persist in representing him as *three*? Their three persons, they reply, are not three distinct and intelligent beings; and when we request to be informed what they are, we receive for answer, that they are three *hypostases, subsistences, distinctions, or somewhats*. But if language has any meaning, the *three persons* of the Trinity are as much

three distinct and intelligent beings as Peter, James, and John. They act in capacities altogether distinct, and often in opposition. The first and second persons are not only not the same, but their characters, their views, their conduct are altogether opposed. The Father is stern and inexorable, full of indignation and wrath, demanding infinite satisfaction from his finite creatures for their finite sins. The Son, on the other hand, is gentle, mild, benevolent, full of grace and truth, interposing his mercy between man and the wrath of God, disarming God of his thunders, and redeeming man from his immitigable vengeance. How is it possible that any one pretending to common sense, can identify two beings whose characters and functions are as opposite as darkness and light, as cruelty and mercy! When the Saviour declares that he and the Father are one, the Unitarian understands and admits the truth of the declaration, in the only sense in which it can be true and intelligible, and as the Saviour himself explains it, when he prays that the disciples may be one with him as he is one with the Father.

The unintelligible and unscriptural views of the physical nature of the Divine Being held by those called orthodox, are not the worst against which the Unitarian objects and protests. Those views of the moral character of God, which the Westminster Confession would oblige us to adopt, are equally contradictory to Scripture and subversive of all that love, gratitude, and veneration, which we should cherish to the greatest, wisest, and best of Beings. The Sacred Volume introduces Jehovah proclaiming "I am the Lord thy God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, and forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." It informs us, that "God is good unto all, and that his tender mercies are over all his works." It unites with universal experience in declaring that "He causes his sun to shine on the evil and the good, and sends his rain on the just and unjust;" that he "gives us rain from heaven with fruitful seasons, and fills our hearts with joy and gladness." It proclaims that God is love, that he is a Father, the protector and benefactor of the human race. Yes, it represents God as a Being infinitely amiable, unchangeably good, inexhaustibly beneficent, and gives us such beautiful illustrations of his moral nature and attributes, as must excite love and gratitude, as well as awe and veneration, in every one capable of such affections. But with what views of the Divine Being are we presented in the unhallowed pages of Calvinistic theology! It represents Him not as good, or merciful, or even as just, as moved by paternal love in all his dealings with the children of men—but as a Tyrant, arbitrary, remorseless, sanguinary, outwitted and his purpose opposed by the spirit of evil—vindictive, full of wrath, and, under the abused and nicknamed idea of justice, passing such decrees and denouncing such torments against all for the offence of one, as in idea alone harrow up the soul and freeze the life-blood in the heart. The Scripture requires us to love God with all the heart and mind and soul and strength, and at the same time it furnishes ample reasons why we should love Him

with all the powers and affections of our nature. But how is it possible to love the God of Calvin? What faculty of the mind or affection of the heart can lead us to love that which is hateful?

In connection with these hideous views of God, are equally hideous views of his works. We are taught by such books as the Confession of Faith, to look on the earth as under the curse of its Creator—that earth of whose beauty and fertility we read such glowing descriptions in the Sacred Volume. Yes, we are admonished to look on all the glories of this magnificent universe, on the romantic hills replete with mineral treasures, the harvest-covered plains, the flower-enamelled vallies, as under the blighting curse of Him who bade them be, as if he had created for evil and not for good—for his shame and not for his glory. Oh! how can the human mind be so perverted as to acquiesce in the truth of such doctrines as these?

But the human mind does not acquiesce in them—it rebels against them and feels that they are false. Even the theologian who has subscribed his name to them feels that they are false. When he speaks the genuine language of his heart and affections, it is in strains such as these—

“Oh, how canst thou renounce the boundless store  
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields?  
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,  
The pomp of groves and garniture of fields—  
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,  
And all that echoes to the song of even—  
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,  
And all that dread magnificence of Heaven—  
Oh, how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven?”

But the creed of the Calvinist tells us, we must reprobate all such sentiments, and instead of asking if we “renounce,” asks if we “adopt” them, how shall we “hope to be forgiven?”

We are taught to regard ourselves and our fellow-creatures as outcasts from the Divine favour—all, except a favoured few, predestinated, for no demerit of their own, by a cruel arbitrary decree, to torment without intermission in hell fire for ever! A father is taught to regard his son, and a mother her daughter, as born in sin and conceived in iniquity, proper subjects of the Divine displeasure, and justly subjected to suffer punishment for a transgression committed six thousand years ago, of which it was impossible they could have any knowledge or participation! We know of nothing in any form of Heathenism so shocking as this. We turn from it with abhorrence, to find relief from its pressure and from its contamination, in the words of Holy Writ, declaring that Jehovah will judge the world in righteousness, and render unto every one according to his deeds, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile, for there is no respect of persons with God.

Such sentiments as these, on which we have thought it necessary to animadvert, must have a pernicious tendency in contracting the mind and repressing the noblest feelings of our nature, and in making man the depraved and corrupted being which it affirms him to be. Oh, but we are told the effect is altogether the reverse!

One of the most eloquent and distinguished Scottish divines attributes the good moral character of the people of Scotland to the Calvinistic principles in which they have been instructed. Dr. Chalmers asks, "How comes it that Scotland, which of all the countries in Europe is the most signalised by the rigid Calvinism of her pulpits, should also be most signalised by the moral glory which sits on the aspect of her general population? How, in the name of a mystery, should it happen that such a theology as ours is conjoined with the most unvitiated peasantry in the nations of Christendom? The allegation against our Church is, that in the argumentation of our abstract and speculative controversies, the people are too little schooled to the performance of good works; and how then is it, that in the courts of justice, when compared with the Calendars of our sister country, they should have so vastly less to do with their evil works? It is certainly a most important experience, that in that country where there is most of Calvinism, there should be least of crime—that what may be called the most doctrinal nation of Europe, should at the same time be the least depraved—and that the land wherein the people are most deeply imbued with the principles of salvation by grace, should be the least depraved either by their week-day profligacies or their Sabbath profanations. When Knox came over from the school of Geneva, he brought its strict and at the same time uncorrupted orthodoxy along with him, and with this he pervaded all the formularies of that Church which was founded by him, and not only did it flame abroad from all our pulpits, but through our schools and our catechisms it was brought down to the boyhood of our land, and from one generation to another have our Scottish youth been familiarised to the sound of it from their very infancy; and unpromising as such a system of tuition may be in the eye of the academic moralist, having the object of building up a virtuous and a well-doing peasantry, certain it is, that as the wholesale result, there has palpably come forth of it the most moral peasantry in Europe."

This seems plausible, but we fear our excellent divine has fallen into a common error, called by logicians *non causa pro causa*. He has assigned a wrong cause for the true one, when the true one was at hand. Acceding at present to the justness of his assumption, that the peasantry of Scotland are distinguished for their good moral character and principle beyond the peasantry of any other country, and granting for a moment that Calvinism is the cause, we ask why Calvinism does not produce the same effect wherever it is embraced? Why does it not work this effect in every individual mind into which it is admitted? Calvinists, we presume, will scarcely personate the Pharisee of the Gospel so completely as to adopt his very language, and thank God that they are not as other men are, extortioners, adulterers, or even as this despised heretic. They, as well as others, are, by their own confession, to the heart's core corrupt, and we know not that Calvinism has any peculiar power or principle of regeneration. The morality of the peasantry of Scotland may be attributed, not to Calvinism, but to other causes which have existed in defiance of

Calvinism, and triumphed over its demoralising influences. It may be ascribed, first of all, not to the dogmas of Calvin, but to a benignant nature, moulded, not under the curse, but under the blessing of the Creator; and secondly, it may be ascribed, not to the stern dogmas of Calvin and Knox, but to the general diffusion of knowledge emanating from her parochial schools, her colleges, universities, and philosophical institutions—to her taste for general literature, her poetry, science, and the arts, those arts of which one who knew nothing of Calvinism, and who was no common observer of human nature, alleged that they soften the manners and tame their ferocity. Above all, it may be attributed to the frequent perusal of the Sacred Volume, which is the inmate of every cottage, and the pleasing instructor of every village group. We attribute it to the power of religion, speaking not in the language of Calvin and Knox, but of the Prophets, Moses, and the Saviour himself. We attribute it to the power of genuine Christianity operating against Calvinism, like the sun against the wind, and supplying a constant antidote to its poison. In the beautiful poem of the Cotter's Saturday Night, which is considered as a true picture of the manners of the Scottish peasantry, there is no Calvinism. From the Bible the venerable father of the family selects instruction for the inmates of his dwelling, and when he calls on them to offer up the evening sacrifice of prayer, it is not to worship a Trinity, but the God and Father of us all.

Sweet water flows not from a bitter spring. The stream of human kindness wells not from the dark puddles of Calvinism. It comes from the heart which God formed tender and humane, and which Calvinism vilifies as filled with impurity and corruption. The religious principles which influence the moral conduct of the Scottish peasantry, are precisely those which sympathise with the principles of Unitarianism. From the Bible they learn doctrines which neutralise the baneful tenets of Calvin. Here they read that God is not the tyrant but the Father of his creatures, that the day of judgment in which he is to judge the world in righteousness is yet to come, and that it has not been anticipated by an everlasting decree, determining their destiny millions of ages before they were born.

The doctrine of the Trinity, by the admission of some of its ablest advocates, is altogether a doctrine of *inference* and not of *positive deduction*. The doctrine of the Divine Unity is, on the other hand, a doctrine of positive declaration, asserted and enforced, not once, nor twice, nor seven times, but seventy times seven, and pervading the whole of the Bible from Genesis to the Revelation. It was maintained by Moses and the succeeding Hebrew legislators, kings, prophets, apostles, and above all, by the Saviour himself. It was held by the first and purest ages of the Christian church, till the inventions of men gaining the ascendancy, the simplicity of Gospel truth was tarnished and almost lost. But again, we predict, the bright truth of the Gospel will shine forth in beauty and splendour, to irradiate and vivify the earth. It has arisen with healing in its wings, and will never again experience a similar obscuration. Great revolutions in

thought are the work of time, but when once commenced they will go on with accelerated speed. Let the human mind be taught to vindicate its rights, to shake off the yoke of human authority in religion; let it candidly and honestly search for the truth in the Scriptures, and we shall have no fears for the rapid success and ultimate universal triumph of Unitarian Christianity. At home it is going on without much noise or parade, but still going on; and gaining converts, as we know, in quarters where the doctrines have never been openly advocated, and where the spirit of bigotry and intolerance has long reigned undisturbed. Our silent but powerful and eloquent missionaries, the tracts and essays of our Unitarian Associations, are discharging their office well. We want only greater means and more vigorous exertion to extend its dominion. In America, the land of freedom, where there are no ecclesiastical establishments, which rob the people to support error, and war against the truth, it has gloriously triumphed, and is gloriously triumphing. The fears of its enemies are proclaiming its victory. We are told by Mr. Ferguson of Woodhill, as quoted in a recent number of "*Chambers' Information for the People*," that Unitarianism is making *frightful strides* in America. This is delightful! *Frightful strides!* Yes, we believe it well; frightful to the enemies of truth, frightful to the friends of corruption, frightful to the lovers of mystery, to the soul-enslavers and "heart-probers," to bigots, fanatics, and pretended saints. But to the friends of truth, of liberty of conscience, of genuine Christianity, how cheering, how beautiful, how sublime! We trust these frightful strides will become more frightful and more rapid, that they will traverse every green valley in Ireland, and every wild hill and every populous city in Caledonia. "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth glad tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth." We hope that Unitarian Christianity, like the angel of the Revelation, her face like the sun, and her feet like pillars of fire, will set her right foot upon the sea and her left upon the land, and with a voice loud as seven thunders, she will echo to the confines of the world, and from earth to heaven and from heaven to earth, Jehovah our God, Jehovah is One!

Mr. Christopher Dunlop of Paisley, moved the following resolution:—"That the Members of this Association, now present from various parts of Scotland, whilst congratulating each other on the progress of their principles, cannot refrain from the grateful acknowledgment of their obligations to their brethren in England, for their sympathy and aid—they tender to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, the Hackney and the Liverpool Fellowship Funds, their warmest thanks; and their fervent wish is, that the united efforts of the friends of truth and liberty may be abundantly blessed." Mr. Dunlop said—



The resolution with which I am entrusted is, to thank our English brethren for their kind aid and sympathy, which I am sure will elicit your warmest concurrence.

Our first duty is an ardent expression of gratitude. But there is a higher and far more important duty which devolves on each and all of us—a duty the discharge of which is worth ten thousand peals of the most rapturous and most enthusiastic burst of feeling—the duty of forwarding our cause to the utmost of our power, both by pecuniary aid, and by personal exertion. Without this, our warmest thanks were a glaring mockery; and a request for continued favours, a gross insult.

The progress of truth not being commensurate to our wishes generally damps our zeal, while it ought rather to spur us on to increased exertions. The more opposition should be met by the more nerve, and the more difficulty by the greater courage.

The success of last year, which has been so ably and so eloquently reviewed, ought to satisfy the most sanguine; but there are some who would expect Unitarian Churches to start into being like the magic burst of Roderic Dhu's Highlanders from their heather couches. Nature lags behind their expectations—they become disheartened, lukewarm, indifferent, callous. But let such view the matter dispassionately. Unitarianism, from its purity, universality, and eternity, must, according to nature, be slow of progress. If we could fill our sails with the passing breeze of prejudice, or shape our course to the fleeting tide of passion, our numbers would be swelled. Or if we could fight the orthodox with their own weapons, we should gain partisans. But while their teachers receive *the spirit by the laying on of hands*, ours have to acquire their knowledge by a deep study of the Oracles of God. They can wield the thunderbolts of heaven, denounce us sinners of the deepest dye, and plunge us into everlasting liquid flame; while we can but regret their biased minds, and call them erring brothers; but deeming them sincere, we welcome them to heaven. They can guard their army from defection, by threatening to hand them over to their marshal-provost, the devil; while we can only keep ours together by enlightening their understandings and interesting their hearts. They can make their votaries righteous by proxy; while we can only esteem those righteous who are righteous. Their religion is of the world, hence their servants fight for them, and the rulers of the earth league with them, and the pride of fashion smiles on them, and the myrmidons of interest cling to them, and the hypocrite bows to them, and the incense of praise flatters them; but, like every thing of earthly origin, it carries in its bosom the seeds of its own destruction; it shall endure but for a season, and shall pass away with the dissipation of darkness and ignorance. Our religion is from heaven, hence it is left to the protection of heaven; and the rulers of the earth denounce us, and the pride of fashion frowns on us, and the minion of interest flies from us, and the hypocrite insults us, and the saint and the sinner revile us; but the heavenly seed of revelation is sown in the unsophisticated heart, and vivified by the light of nature, and strengthened by advancing

philosophy, and watered by the showers of knowledge, and extended by the march of liberty, and expanded by unfading love, and beautified by the flowers of benevolence, and enduring as the universe.

Every thing in nature of rapid growth is of short duration; while every thing that is grand, noble, and enduring, proceeds step by step, slowly, progressively, but surely. Thus, the ephemera starts into life and flutters in maturity, but dies before a second sun; but the proud eagle graduates in strength, outlives creation's lord, and leaves him in the dust, while he in vigour skims the lofty skies and gambols in the clouds. And so the marsh-fed willow o'ershoots its twin the oak, but crumbling into dust, it leaves the woodland king in youth and beauty bright. And so the myriad insect sects, from passion sprung and propagate by fear, by curses fenced and bigotry upheld, shall die and be no more, while heaven-born truth, warmed by diffusive love, shall germ, and grow, and bud, and leaf, and flower, and co-endure, with Heaven's eternal King.

Let each of us resolve to do all we can to forward the glorious cause, and respectfully solicit our English brethren for continued favours. Were they to withdraw their kind countenance from our opening success, it might damp our rising hopes and render their former benevolence of little avail; while by continued assistance, they may create a current that shall flow on till our remotest glens shall echo with Jehovah's praise, and till the flood of freedom, light, and purity shall reach our loneliest cottage.

Ye generous donors! how enviable it is to have riches, and thus to shower your blessings around!

Those who have been attracted from the blank, dreary waste of hopeless Atheism, to the luxuriant fertile soil of the soul-satisfying and joy-inspiring religion of revelation, shall thank you with ardent gratitude.

Those who have been translated from the pale, lunar light of doubtful Deism, to the meridian effulgence of assuring Christianity, shall ever praise and bless you.

Those who have been snatched from the volcanic smoke and burning lava of gloomy Calvinism, to breathe in the pure atmosphere of nature, and to revel in the unbounded love of the primitive and joyous religion of the Saviour, shall thank you with joy unspeakable.

The affectionate mother who bathes with tears the yet beautiful corpse of her little innocent, and whose heart is torn with the uncertainty of her child's election, when she hears that "of such is the kingdom of heaven," her heart shall leap with joy, and in the fulness of her soul she shall pour on your heads a mother's blessing.

The afflicted father who lowers to the grave his long-cherished impenitent, and who in dreadful anticipation already hears his agonising groans throughout eternity—when he learns that Christ shall reign till death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed, that a time is coming when there shall be no more sin nor sorrow, and when every tear shall be wiped away, the sting of death shall

be plucked from his distracted bosom, and with ardent gratitude to the God of love he shall implore eternal blessings on your holy and delightful labours.

Time would fail me to enumerate all those who will bless you. But oh, let your benevolent efforts be guided by higher motives than the praise and gratitude of man—look not for your reward in India nor America, in France, Transylvania, or Geneva, in Ireland or Scotland, or the present age, but trust for the fulness of your reward in futurity and in heaven.

Rev. Henry Clarke seconded the resolution. We can only present our readers with an outline of his observations:—

England deserves our sincerest thanks, our warmest good wishes; and we hereby tender them. And we will give more than our thanks and wishes. We will give practical proof that we deem no labours too great, no exertions too arduous which can be directed towards the accomplishment of those objects which our brethren in England are aiding us to prosecute; and we will rest assured, that then we shall continue to obtain their sympathy and aid. Why should we be discouraged, why cast down? Why relax our exertions? Is it because anti-scriptural doctrines still find multitudes of votaries? Is it because we are calumniated, and our religious views are distorted and belied? This should only double our zeal and treble our benevolence. Is it because we are taunted with the paucity of our numbers? That argument against us was so ably answered, and so completely disposed of in yesterday afternoon's sermon, that it is needless to pursue it. We are conscious that we mean well. We would lead our fellow-men from metaphysical darkness to Gospel light. We would emancipate them from the iron thralldom of school divinity, and invest them with the glorious liberty of the sons of God. We would scatter to the winds the husks with which they are fed, and pour into the ocean the waters of strife which they have been accustomed to drink; and give them instead, the bread of life which came down from heaven, and the wine which flows from the vineyard of Christ. Let orators, if they please, call our faith the frigid zone of Christianity, assert that we cannot even enjoy the beauties of nature, and sport the figure of rhetoric, that 'twere as easy to extract sunbeams from cucumbers, as devotion from Unitarianism; and we will confute the falsehood and the figure, with the facts, that the devotional Lindsey and Disney, the poetic Barbauld and Milton, the philosophical Priestley and Newton, the pious Apostles and the godlike Jesus, were all—all Unitarians. By these, and by countless millions, has it been practically shown, that Unitarianism is not a frigid zone from which devotion and piety, and the love of nature's beauties, and nature's and revelation's God, cannot spring. True, Unitarianism is not the torrid zone which gives birth to the loathsome serpent of fanaticism, and the fierce beasts of prey, bigotry and persecution. These are found only in the regions where the scorching heats of an intolerable zeal beat upon the land, and boil the blood, and turn the brain, and drive

its inhabitants to insanity; and such are the regions known by the name of Trinitarianism. Many of us have sojourned a while in those regions, and found them pestiferous; and we have removed to a more temperate, congenial, and healthful climate. We feel its many and great advantages, and would have all men to participate in our pleasures.

The resolution was then unanimously and cordially adopted.

“The health of the Rev. J. Scott Porter, with sincere thanks for his services of yesterday,” was proposed by Mr. Harris, and heartily greeted by the meeting. The President, in proposing Mr. Porter’s health, remarked, that though no believer in hereditary wisdom, yet all experience showed that a prevailing cast of character often descended from father to son—passed a high eulogium on the strength of mind and honesty of purpose shown by Rev. William Porter of Newtownlimavady, during the eventful struggle for liberty in the Synod of Ulster—was persuaded the son was worthy the parent—sketched the past public services of their respected friend whom they were now honouring, wishing him every happiness in every relation of life.

Mr. Porter returned thanks in an admirable address, which we exceedingly regret our inability to report. Those who heard it would have been glad to have had their recollections of its power revived by its perusal, and all our readers would have been gratified by the excellent observations it contained. Mr. Harris, on its conclusion, stated that he had received a request from many of his congregation, and from several of the friends from different parts of the country, to propose that the Sermons of yesterday be printed. He cordially concurred in that proposal, and earnestly hoped that the deep impression these discourses had produced on all who heard them, would be extended by their publication. The proposal was hailed from all parts of the Hall, papers were circulated round the room, and in a short time considerably more than two hundred copies were subscribed for. We gladly announce that the three Sermons are in the press, and will speedily be issued.

Mr. Davidson of Glasgow, proposed—“That this Meeting believing Civil and Religious Liberty, to be identified with the improvement and happiness of mankind, and to be really part and parcel of pure and undefiled religion, express their deep regret at the rejection of the

claims of their elder Unitarian brethren, to be recognised as freemen; they deprecate that rejection as antichristian in its spirit and unjust in its nature; and they confidently anticipate the day when aristocratical and high church prejudices shall yield to the benignant spirit of the Gospel, and the laws affecting the Jew, as well as all enactments against freedom of thought, shall be blotted out from the statute-book which they disgrace." Mr. Davidson, after making some general remarks on the importance of civil and religious freedom to the improvement and happiness of mankind, exposed most strikingly the nature of the opposition made to the emancipation of the Jews in the House of Lords, as well as the individuals by whom that opposition was offered—showed that these antiquated prejudices must finally give way, and that then freedom would be enjoyed by every man without distinction of class or faith.

The resolution was unanimously passed, after some remarks on liberty, what it was and what it was not, made in seconding it by Rev. Archibald Macdonald.

The following resolution was to have been proposed by Mr. Burns of Saltcoats, but having been obliged by indisposition to leave the Hall, it was moved by Mr. Robert Hedderwick of Glasgow:—"That this Meeting believing the principles they hold sacred, to be identified with all improvement, rejoice in the efforts that are making in every part of the world, and particularly in their common country, for the education of the human mind morally, politically, and theologically; convinced as they are, that on that education depend the emancipation of the intellect from time-hallowed prejudices, the despotism that enthralled and the superstition that degrades, and the free and full enjoyment of the greatest possible happiness by the greatest possible number." Mr. Hedderwick, after some introductory remarks, said—

How full of the expansive benevolence and love, of the divine spirit of Christianity—how free of the sectarian spirit of Calvinistic exclusiveness, of the "stand by, I am holier than thou,"—is this golden rule of Utilitarianism, I may call it of Unitarianism—"the free and full enjoyment of the greatest possible happiness by the greatest possible number"! What a glorious world, what a heaven upon earth would not our "howling wilderness," as it is libellously termed, become, if this admirable principle were generally diffused, imbibed, and acted upon—if men really sought to do unto others as they would that others should do unto them! Slavery, and war, and crime, and the lust of wealth

and power, would then cease their troubling; and we should not have Christian nations merely, but what is far different and far better, nations of Christians.

How is this millennium to be accelerated? How, but by "the education of the human mind"? And without pretending to the gift of prophecy, or seeking impiously to fix a time for its coming—events are stirring, and efforts are making in almost every part of the world, which seem to hold out the assurance that the auspicious day is not very distant.

There is in truth a glorious awakening abroad in the world, which the Unitarian Christian cannot fail to contemplate with hope and rejoicing. The press, realising almost the idle dream of "perpetual motion," is unceasing in its efforts for the advancement of mind;—and the crooked place of man's intellect is being made straight, and the rough place of his heart is becoming smooth, and even the moral and intellectual wilderness begins to blossom as the rose. The enemies of their race—the Triune Despots of the north, may band themselves together for an unholy crusade against human liberty and human good; but the sword is no longer a match for the pen—and where is the artillery that can cope with the thunders of an enlightened and a united people's voice? "The greatest happiness of the greatest number" may the more speedily be secured, even for the barbaric Autocracy itself, by the Congress of Despots at Munchen Gratz.

"The First Flower of the world," crushed hitherto, and sadly drooping beneath the blighting mildew of misrule almost without parallel, gives cheering evidence of renewed life and loveliness. The great charter of our freedom, wrung so lately from the rapacious grasp of a selfish, domineering oligarchy, extends also to the sister isle—as well it ought, for nobly did her sons stand by us in our struggle—and gives to the people of that oppressed and priest-ridden land a powerful means of righting their numerous and crying wrongs. And despite the so laudably benevolent exertions of our Scottish clergy, who, well knowing the utter incompatibility of both with intelligence, persevere in the destruction of the Irish hierarchy, the inevitable downfall of their own less obnoxious but equally antichristian establishment—despite the exertions of our Scottish clergy, there is hope of happiness because there is education for Ireland. The Bible is being read by the Catholic as well as by the Protestant youth;—with that, and with such instructors as the Reverend Gentlemen who have honoured us on this occasion with their presence, and edified and delighted us so much by their powerful ministrations and most eloquent addresses, what is there of good that we may not anticipate for Ireland? A little while, and the monstrosity of a church without a people will no longer cumber its shores; and the consequent removal of that nuisance the tithe-proctor, rendering the coercion bill obsolete as even at its enactment it was unnecessary and disgraceful to its authors, will leave the brave, generous, and highly gifted, and deeply injured children of Erin to the free and full enjoyment of her numerous natural advantages—her "fine soil and her rich bowels of minerals" will then be all their own—and the happiness

of the few so pre-eminently the bane of Ireland, will then give way to that of "the greatest number;"—and in that prospect, cheering as it is benevolent, we as Unitarians cannot hesitate to rejoice.

In our own comparatively favoured Island, political tyranny and corruption, too long permitted to lord it over us, have all but departed before the enlightened voice of public opinion; and religious bigotry and intolerance, sure to run riot where a profitable monopoly is made of salvation, have happily received their death-wounds from the suicidal hands of an avaricious priesthood. The persecutions by the state clergy for tithe and annuity-tax, when their mitred brethren had rendered themselves so odious by their consistently antichristian conduct in "the House of Mischief," and at the very moment when the voluntary churchmen were associating together, and buckling on their armour for a trial of moral strength with themselves, must have the effect of hastening the removal of those barriers to all improvement—the unsightly hierarchies of these kingdoms. When that shall be accomplished—when there shall no longer be step-children in the state, and if there be a House of Lords when at least there shall be no Bishops in it—then may we expect that truth will triumph—that religion as well as law and government, shall be *cheap* and *good*—that the doors of our seats of learning shall be thrown open to all, without distinction of rank or of sect—and a liberal system of national education, even though the Member for Oldham should be opposed to the improvement, shall be established on the ruins of an anti-national church,—then indeed may *Popay's* occupation be gone, and the schoolmaster go far to supplant the poor-law and the policeman—and the stream of knowledge, unpolluted by the muddy waters of prejudice, of bigotry, or of self-interest, and unembittered by one drop of the gall of party rancour, shall run on, unbroken, undisturbed, in one wide, majestic, ever-swelling, glorious current—"the greatest happiness of the greatest number" the end and aim of all whom it passes in its flow, or bears upon its bosom.

Mr. Harris said, that resolution, he was persuaded, needed no seconding, for it had its response in the breast of every individual in that assembly. It had its foundation in Christianity; but if any thing could make it dearer to that meeting, it was the recollection of the fact, that for the concluding clause the world was indebted to one of the brightest ornaments of their denomination—the calumniated and persecuted, but virtuous and enlightened Dr. Joseph Priestley. The resolution was heartily cheered and approved.

Mr. C. B. Blyth of Peebles, after some excellent introductory remarks, went on to say—

The resolution I hold in my hand, commences by a declaration that "this Association welcomed the accession of the Reverend Archibald Macdonald amongst the advocates of despised and un-

popular truth." Yes, my friends, and if the acquisition to our holy and benevolent cause, of talents such as few are blessed with—of a love of truth so deep-rooted, as to nerve him to pursue his rugged and noble, albeit, despised and unnoticed career, with a fortitude which no perils could daunt, and an inflexible perseverance which no discouragements could weary or exhaust,—if a patriotic ardour and an eloquence in the cause of injured and suffering humanity, which many a time has wrung, even from his theological opponents, their most enthusiastic plaudits—if these things are of any value, good cause indeed had we to welcome his accession.

But let me pause to inquire, does it instantly occur to you all what is implied in the little paragraph I have quoted to you from my resolution: "an advocate of despised and unpopular truth?" Is it nothing, my friends! in this age of cold indifference to all but self-interest, when Plutus seems by almost universal suffrage, to be exalted to the throne which ought alone to be filled by the One Jehovah? and (would it were not so) has the distribution of many of the choicest gifts which sweeten the cup of life, and render our passage through it bright and happy; is it nothing, I ask, to renounce at once and for ever all hope of a participation in such blessings; and with the consciousness of talents, which, otherwise employed, might secure for their possessor, competence and distinction—calmly, resignedly, yea, cheerfully, to select the lowly hut of cheerless poverty for his abode? Is it a small thing to renounce the society of those whom we have been accustomed to esteem and venerate—to bear the altered eye, not of hard unkindness, but of tenderest affection—to be forsaken by the friend with whom we have long taken sweet counsel, and walked to the house of God in company—to withstand the agonised tears and entreaties of the mother, who has long delighted to train up our youthful minds in the way which she believes can alone conduct us to heaven. Can the heart, even of the most obdurate, contemplate unmoved the spectacle of a dutiful and most affectionate son, compelled, at the instigation of conscience, to become a forlorn and friendless wanderer from the paternal roof—his portion the curse instead of the blessing of an aged father, whose brightest hopes he has blighted, and whose grey hairs he has brought down sorrowing almost to the grave? Yet this, and much more, which I want the ability to describe, but which you have all the power to conceive, is but too often the portion of him, who in this ungenial and bigoted land, becomes the advocate of despised and unpopular truth; and has been that of him whom we so cordially welcomed to our cause.

My resolution goes on to say, "the members now present would do injustice to their feelings, did they not bear testimony to the zeal and devotedness with which he has discharged the arduous duties of his station; and whilst they regret, on their own account, his removal to another part of the United Kingdom, they cordially express their best wishes for his happiness and success." Mr. Chairman, I had long anticipated with unfeigned pleasure, making one amongst my old friends and fellow-worshippers on this cheering and delightful occasion; and although business of



pressing importance demanded my presence now in England, yet I could not resist the strong desire I felt of thus publicly bearing my sincere though feeble testimony to the worth of the individual who forms the subject of this resolution—of thus publicly taking leave of my much esteemed friend—thus publicly and from my heart uniting with you all in bidding him God speed.

The resolution was seconded by the Vice-president of the meeting, Mr. Baird of Greenock, who, after referring to the eloquent manner in which it had been introduced by Mr. Blyth, proceeded to say—

That the accession of Mr. Macdonald to the cause of Unitarianism should have been hailed by this Association with the liveliest feelings of delight, I can readily believe; for I am persuaded that no individual has ever attended the services of Mr. Macdonald without being firmly impressed with the conviction, that in him the much-despised and unpopular doctrines of a simple faith, had found no feeble advocate, and that he was pre-eminently qualified to expose the unreasonable and unscriptural doctrines of a reputed orthodoxy, to the reprobation of every intelligent mind not swayed by passion, enslaved by prejudice, or debased by fear.

Naturally of a benevolent disposition, the attention of Mr. Macdonald was first directed to that inconsistent and contradictory doctrine of orthodoxy, which teaches that "God is love," but that nevertheless he will take delight in punishing everlastingly the children of his own creation, and that too for an offence said to have been committed some thousand years before the objects of his interminable hate were called into existence. Feeling such a doctrine too monstrous to be believed, unless resting upon some positive declarations of Scripture, and finding no such evidence in the Record of Truth, Mr. Macdonald instantly rejected the doctrine, as a libel upon the all-merciful Parent of the human race, and became an advocate for the final restoration of all mankind through a state of remedial punishment, to one of purity and of bliss. Mr. Macdonald having accepted the pastoral charge of the Universalist Society, Greenock, about four years since, conducted their services for some time as a Trinitarian. In the course of his readings, however, he soon discovered that the doctrine of the Trinity, with its long catalogue of subsidiary errors, had as little foundation in Scripture as that of eternal reprobation; and with that boldness and manliness of character which ever accompany the asserter of truth, Mr. Macdonald lost no time in communicating his views to his little flock; and the consequence was, his retirement from that connexion. Mr. Macdonald having thus embraced Unitarianism, the avowed Unitarians of Greenock rallied around him, and in conjunction with those Universalists who had also rejected Trinitarianism, a society was formed for the purpose of worshipping the One God and Father of all, in the name of Jesus Christ. Unitarianism having thus obtained a local habitation, became the subject of conversation in the domestic circle, and of attack from the pulpits of the orthodox; numbers repaired to the Unitarian Chapel to hear something of that heresy

everywhere spoken against; many of them, learning from Mr. Macdonald the beautiful simplicity and holy tendency of Unitarian Christianity, were induced to examine for themselves "if these things were so," and being satisfied that the worship of One God was clearly and unequivocally taught in Scripture, they renounced the errors of their former creed, and united themselves to that sect which prefers the Bible to the holy mysteries of the Church of Rome, the simple precepts of Jesus to the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and a life of virtue to the dogmas of Calvin, and the creed of the Apostles to that of St. Athanasius. Calumny and persecution, with every epithet of abuse, were poured out upon the believers in the new faith, and, as might have been expected, the leader of the sect came in for his peculiar share of vituperation; but Macdonald was neither to be shaken by calumny, nor subdued by persecution; no, no, his soul was cast in too gigantic a mould, for all the puny efforts of all the sons of Calvin and of Knox either to reduce or subdue.

Although the Unitarians of Greenock deeply regret the loss of Mr. Macdonald, they still rejoice in his success, and look upon his removal as a step to farther usefulness in the cause of truth and morality; they are not insensible to the advantages which they have derived from his instructions, and I am certain, whilst I express my own feelings of regret at a separation from his social intercourse, that I very inadequately express the feelings of my Greenock brethren. The bitter pang of separation, was very lately too keenly felt by many a sobbing bosom, to leave any doubt of the estimation in which Mr. Macdonald was held by his little flock; they felt the separation was tearing from them a much valued friend—one whom they loved with a tender affection; they were sensible that to him they were more immediately indebted for the delightful exercise of social worship—that to him, in many instances, they were obliged for disabusing their minds of a false system of theology—that by his forcible, argumentative, and perspicuous teachings, they were imbued with a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus—that, both by precept and example, they had learned of him, that a holy life was the only sacrifice acceptable to the merciful Father of the human family—and that for a man to be happy either here or hereafter, he must lead a life of piety and of virtue. Yes, my fellow Christians! the Unitarians of Greenock do feel, that they owe to Mr. Macdonald a debt of gratitude which they never can repay; and I beg leave, for myself and in their name, most cordially to unite in the expression of our best wishes for his happiness and success.

The resolution, "That this Association welcomed the accession of the Rev. Archibald Macdonald among the advocates of despised and unpopular truth; and the Members now present would do injustice to their feelings, did they not bear testimony to the zeal and devotedness with which he has discharged the arduous duties of his station; and whilst they regret, on their own account,

his removal to another part of the United Kingdom, they cordially express their best wishes for his happiness and success,"—was then put by Mr. Harris, universally approved, and in the name and behalf of the Association, the President expressed the feelings and wishes of its Members to their respected friend.

Mr. Macdonald spoke to the following effect:—

Believe me, I am deeply sensible of the proof of regard and respect you have now given me. I joyfully accepted the welcome held out to me by this Association, because, in being recognised by you, I was recognised by a body of Christians who stand in the first rank of those who are endeavouring to enlighten, emancipate, and regenerate the human race—because, in joining myself to you, I resigned no part of my individual liberty of investigation—I subscribed no creed of obscure and contradictory articles; which, whatever new light might burst on my mind, I should be compelled to keep whole and undefiled, or perish everlastingly. Admitted among you, I received the New Testament into my hands, and was invited to examine all things according to my best judgment, and hold fast that which is good, without the fear of Presbytery or Convocation, Conference or General Assembly, before my eyes. From creeds and systems which distract the understanding and harrow up the heart, I have fled along with you, my Christian friends, to the simplicity and benignity of Unitarianism. From dogmas at which reason stands aghast, and faith herself is half confounded, I joyfully acceded to a scheme which offers doctrines worthy of God to reveal, worthy of man to believe—which exhibits God as our Father, and universal man as our brother, the promotion of human good as our Christianity, and the immortality and purity of all mankind as the consummation of this goodly fabric of the universe.

When I enrolled myself in the list of those who advocate despised and unpopular truth, I did that only which I could not avoid doing—I yielded to the force of evidence; and those who bewail my aberration from the fold of orthodoxy, should convince my judgment, not rail against my motives. In vain will an appeal in favour of orthodoxy, be made to my fears or hopes. Fear is no friend to accurate discrimination—the sophistry of the passions will in a well-regulated mind never influence the decisions of the understanding. Fear of punishment from God for the honest convictions of my judgment, I have none; I have bidden farewell to fear when I bade farewell to Calvinism—and as to hope, why, of that it has little to give; for the system in which I was educated, strips God of mercy and man of hope.

When I had discovered what I deemed truth for myself, I deemed a duty its diffusion to others—what was good for me would be good for others. Truth is for each and for all. Necessity then was laid upon me, and woe if I preached not what seemed truth. Therefore do I advocate that which is despised and unpopular, for I have ever detested that maxim of cowardly hypo-

crisy, "Speak with the vulgar, but think with the wise;" and I would substitute for it, "Let us be bold enough to be honest, and honest enough to be bold." Truth must be beneficial to man at the long run, whatever erroneous feelings it may shock in its progress, whatever prejudices it may overthrow, whatever high and vaunted authorities it may bring to nought. Oh, that this conviction of truth's utility were more generally felt and acted on:

"Truth, ever lovely since the world began,

The foe of tyrants, but the friend of man."

It is a most sacred duty sacredly to obey the sincere convictions of our minds; as, on the other hand, to stifle those convictions, and act contrary to them, is to sin against our rational nature; it is to be traitors to the human race—it is to put our light under a bushel, and voluntarily to renounce the privilege of men and Christians, freely to inquire and openly to avow. How despicable the character of him who has one language on his lips and another in his heart—who sticks one creed upon his surplice, and wears another under his waistcoat! Men of this cast are the Judases of modern times, who for pelf sell truth—fit companions of him who, with the words of kindness on his lips, and the simulated kiss of affection, betrayed the Son of Man into the hands of priests.

But, though an advocate of unpopular truth, I can truly say that I have enjoyed more satisfaction in one day of sincerity than I could have enjoyed in a whole year of hypocrisy. Oh, ye who carry minds ill at ease, teeming with ideas ye fear to examine, and swallowing crudities which ye cannot digest, come out and be ye separated, and dare to keep a conscience, and know the joy and serenity of those who have simplicity in their faith and harmony in their ideas. If I know myself, I *can* afford to keep a conscience; and he who has rejoicing in himself is superior to the scowl of the million. Indeed, our attachment to truth is not weakened by suffering in its defence. Men love what they suffer for, and what men pay little for they care little for; and he who is not prepared to suffer for what he deems important truth, is not worthy to be called truth's disciple. The unpopularity, obloquy, and opposition that surround our faith do not discourage us—

"As the mountain-torrent and the whirlwind's roar,

But bind us to our native mountains more"—

As the oak lashed by the storm strikes its roots deeper and rears its branches higher—as the mother becomes more tenderly attached to her sickly child, whose every pang she has made her own, enduring for it nights of anxiety and days of sadness; so, our attachment grows to the cause in which we suffer. May persecutors learn from this, that harshness only strengthens the heresy it would eradicate, and extends the holy rebellion of truth and liberty.

As to the zeal and devotedness which you impute to me, your present gratifying testimony will be an encouragement to greater exertions. The gentlemen who have moved and seconded this

resolution, and whom I shall always be proud to reckon in the number of my friends, have in their partiality of friendship drawn a moral picture too favourable to the original. They have decked out a beautiful fiction, and baptised it with my name. But this will have its use, and I will only say that I will endeavour to be what they have described. I hope I shall never be less ready than I have been, to assert what I deem truth, however much room there may be to add gentleness of manner to boldness of acting.

Gratifying it must be to us all, but more particularly to me and to that congregation which I lately called mine, to see that Liberal Christianity has obtained so valuable an accession in him who is to come after me. May he be mightier than I, and preferred before me. Yes, Maccall! we know what Calvinism is in Scotland—we have both been trained up under its deadly nightshade, and have bent in terror before its frowning Deity, and have vainly endeavoured to reconcile its jarring dogmas, and have pondered its dread and black decrees, and almost loathed existence bestowed on such hard conditions, and have sometimes doubted—and checked that doubt—whether the God of Nature could inspire one thing, and the God of Christianity a different thing. Yes, my successor! we know what Calvinism is, and we must war with that which binds the bandage of mystery over the eyes of our countrymen, and constrains men to worship arbitrary power, instead of adoring benevolence and wisdom, and alarms with a devil almost almighty, and burdens with a load of original sin which is of itself enough to sink us to the lowest hell. With such dogmas we will war, and devoutly pray—from such views good Lord deliver us and all mankind.

“Health and happiness to the respected President, Rev. George Harris; may God bless his efforts in the cause of truth and righteousness,” was then proposed by Dr. Drummond, in a strain of warm and affectionate panegyric, and received by the Meeting with enthusiasm. Mr. Harris having expressed his gratitude, for the ardour of feeling manifested by the company for his labours and himself; and exposed the statements of Rev. J. G. Lorimer of Glasgow, and Dr. Chalmers, in relation to Unitarians and Unitarianism; announced the melancholy intelligence, of which he had been informed just previously to the meeting, of the death of RAMMOHUN ROY. It would be impossible to convey to those who were not present, an idea of the contrast between the state and expression of feeling during the first part of Mr. Harris’s address, and that after the decease of the Reformer of India had been mentioned. It was thrilling; a heartfelt tribute to departed excellence. The tidings at once changed joy to sorrow, and the voice of Christian exultation and triumph, was

in a moment humbled in silence before the Power who gives, and who takes away. During the solemn stillness which prevailed, lessons of instruction, consolation, duty, and hope, were inculcated, which it is fervently trusted will never be effaced from the minds and hearts of those who heard them.

Mr. Harris then gave out the following hymn, written for this Anniversary by Rev. William Maccall of Greenock. The whole assembly joined in singing; and Mr. Harris closed the meeting with the Lord's prayer and a benediction.

Glory to the Eternal King!  
 To Him let all our praises soar—  
 To Him let all our voices sing,  
 His greatness, goodness to adore  
 Who gives us every mercy—life,  
 And peace, and love, and hope, and joy—  
 Unveils a world where sin, nor strife,  
 Nor grief, nor cares, disturb, destroy.

Glory to the Creator's name!  
 Let all his works his wonders tell;  
 From nature's universal frame  
 Let a triumphant chorus swell;—  
 Above, around, beneath, from sky,  
 From earth, from sea, from stars, from sun,  
 Let the undying melody  
 Through all their wide expansion run.

Glory to Freedom's Mighty God!  
 Diffuse his liberty and light,  
 Destroy the bigot's crushing rod,  
 Oppression's sway, and error's blight;—  
 Such deeds are best and truest praise,  
 The sweetest incense, noblest song;  
 Such anthem let us always raise,  
 Such worship let us all prolong!

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*The Evidences of Christianity. By William Ellery Channing, D. D.*

(Continued from page 479.)

I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, because it is a *rational* religion. It agrees with reason; therefore I count it worthy of acceptance; therefore I do not blush to enrol myself among its friends and advocates. The object of the present discourse, will be the illustration of this claim of Christianity. I wish to show you the harmony

which subsists between the light of God's Word, and that primitive light of reason, which he has kindled within us to be our perpetual guide. If in treating this subject, I shall come into conflict with any class of Christians, I trust I shall not be considered as imputing to them any moral or intellectual defect. I judge men by their motives, dispositions, lives, and not by their speculations or peculiar opinions: and I esteem piety and virtue equally venerable whether found in friend or foe.

Christianity is a rational religion. Were it not so I should be ashamed to profess it. I am aware that it is the fashion with some to decry reason, and to set up revelation as an opposite authority. This error, though countenanced by good men, and honestly maintained for the defence of the Christian cause, ought to be earnestly withstood; for it virtually surrenders our religion into the hands of the unbeliever. It saps the foundation to strengthen the building. It places our religion in hostility to human nature, and gives to its adversaries the credit of vindicating the rights and noblest powers of the mind.

We must never forget that our rational nature is the greatest gift of God. For this we owe him our chief gratitude. It is a greater gift than any outward aid or benefaction, and no doctrine which degrades it can come from its author. The development of it is the end of our being. Revelation is but a means, and is designed to concur with nature, providence, and God's spirit in carrying forward reason to its perfection. I glory in Christianity, because it enlarges, invigorates, exalts my rational nature. If I could not be a Christian without ceasing to be rational, I should not hesitate as to my choice. I feel myself bound to sacrifice to Christianity, property, reputation, life; but I ought not to sacrifice to any religion, that reason which lifts me above the brute, and constitutes me a man. I can conceive no sacrilege greater than to prostrate or renounce the highest faculty which we have derived from God. In so doing we should offer violence to the divinity within us. Christianity wages no war with reason, but is one with it, and is given to be its helper and friend.

I wish in the present discourse, to illustrate and confirm the views now given. My remarks will be arranged under two heads. I propose, first, to show that Christianity is founded on, and supposes the authority of reason, and cannot therefore oppose it without subverting itself

My object in this part of the discourse, will be to expose the error of those who hope to serve revelation by disparaging reason. I shall then, in the second place, compare Christianity and the light of reason, to show their accordance; and shall prove by descending to particulars, that Christianity is eminently a rational religion. My aim, under this head, will be to vindicate the Gospel from the reproaches of the unbeliever, and to strengthen the faith and attachment of its friends. Before I begin, let me observe, that this discussion, from the nature of the subject, must assume occasionally an abstract form, and will demand serious attention. I am to speak of reason, the chief faculty of the mind; and no simplicity of language, in treating such a topic, can exempt the hearer from the necessity of a patient effort of thought.

I am to begin with showing, that the Christian revelation is founded on the authority of reason, and consequently cannot oppose it; and here it may be proper to settle the meaning of the word reason. One of the most important steps towards the truth, is to determine the import of terms. Very often fierce controversies have sprung from obscurity of language, and the parties on explaining themselves, have discovered that they have been spending their strength in a war of words. What, then, is reason?

The term reason is used with so much latitude, that to fix its precise limits, is not an easy task. In this respect, it agrees with the other words which express the intellectual faculties. One idea, however, is always attached to it. All men understand by reason, the highest faculty or energy of the mind. Without labouring for a philosophical definition that will comprehend all its exercises, I shall satisfy myself with pointing out two of its principal characteristics or functions.

First, it belongs to reason to comprehend universal truths. This is among its most important offices. There are particular and there are universal truths. The last are the noblest, and the capacity of perceiving them, is the distinction of intelligent beings; and these belong to reason. Let me give my meaning by some illustrations. I see a stone falling to the ground. This is a particular truth; but I do not stop here. I believe, that not only this particular stone falls towards the earth, but that every particle of matter, in whatever world, tends, or as is sometimes



said, is attracted towards all other matter. Here is a universal truth, a principle extending to the whole material creation, and essential to its existence. This truth belongs to reason. Again, I see a man producing some effect, a manufacture, a house. Here is a particular truth. But I am not only capable of seeing particular causes and effects; I am sure that every thing which begins to exist, no matter when or where, must have a cause; that no change ever has taken place, or ever will take place, without a cause. Here is a universal truth, something true here and every where, true now and through eternity; and this truth belongs to reason. Again, I see with my eyes, I traverse with my hands a limited space; but this is not all. I am sure that beyond the limits which my limbs or senses reach, there is an unbounded space; that go where I will, an infinity will spread around me. Here is another universal truth, and this belongs to reason. The idea of infinity, is indeed one of the noblest conceptions of this faculty. Again, I see a man conferring a good on another. Here is a particular truth or perception. But my mind is not confined to this. I see and feel that it is right for all intelligent beings, exist when or where they may, to do good, and wrong for them to seek the misery of others. Here is a universal truth, a law extending from God to the lowest human being; and this belongs to reason. I trust I have conveyed to you my views in regard to the first characteristic of this highest power of the soul. Its office is to discern universal truths, great and eternal principles. But it does not stop here. Reason is also exercised in applying these universal truths to particular cases, beings, events. For example, reason teaches me, as we have seen, that all changes, without exception, require a cause; and in conformity to this principle, it prompts me to seek the particular causes of the endless changes and appearances which fall under my observation. Thus, reason is perpetually at work on the ideas furnished us by the senses, by consciousness, by memory, associating them with its own great truths, or investing them with its own universality.

I now proceed to the second function of reason, which is, indeed, akin to the first. Reason is the power which tends, and is perpetually striving to reduce our various thoughts to unity or consistency. Perhaps the most fun-

damental conviction of reason is, that all truths agree together; that inconsistency is the mark of error. Its intensest, most earnest effort, is to bring concord into the intellect, to reconcile what seem to be clashing views. On the observation of a new fact, reason strives to incorporate it with former knowledge. It can allow nothing to stand separate in the mind. It labours to bring together scattered truths, and to give them the strength and beauty of a vital order. Its end and delight is harmony. It is shocked by an inconsistency in belief, just as a fine ear is wounded by a discord. It carries within itself an instinctive consciousness, that all things which exist are intimately bound together, and it cannot rest until it has connected whatever we witness with the infinite whole. Reason, according to this view, is the most glorious form or exercise of the intellectual nature. It corresponds to the unity of God and the universe, and seeks to make the soul the image and mirror of this sublime unity.

I have thus given my views of reason; but to prevent all perversion, before I proceed to the main discussion, let me offer a word or two more of explanation. In this discourse, when I speak of the accordance of revelation with reason, I suppose this faculty to be used deliberately, conscientiously, and with the love of truth. Men often baptize with the name of reason their prejudices, unexamined notions, or opinions adopted through interest, pride, or other unworthy biases. It is not uncommon to hear those who sacrifice the plainest dictates of the rational nature, to impulse and passion, setting themselves up as oracles of reason. Now, when I say revelation must accord with reason, I do not mean by the term, the corrupt and superficial opinions of men who have betrayed and debased their rational powers. I mean reason, calmly, honestly exercised, for the acquisition of truth, and the invigoration of virtue.

(To be continued.)

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*To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.*

DEAR SIR,—When I commenced my papers on “The Moral Constitution and History of Man,” I had not formed any distinct plan of their course and limits. It suited my convenience and yours, to have them written out, as I might have leisure, and in Chapters of commo-

dious lengths. After a certain progress, however, I found it requisite to sketch a general outline, and to fill it up methodically, so as to make a Treatise, at once sufficiently extended to develope the doctrine, and at the same time concise enough to condense it into well connected propositions and perspicuous views. This required a more continuous labour and concentrated attention than I had bestowed on the subject at first, and I have now finished all that I think requisite for my present purpose. It will occupy fully as much more space as what has been already taken up in your Pioneer, and as this would extend over an inconvenient period of time (to continue the publication in the same manner), and some of your readers are complaining that they lose sight of the thread of the argument in its present detached form, and wishing to contemplate it entire and at once, I have resolved to complete the publication. The remaining Chapter of Part II. will be occupied with a view of the *favourable* effects which Christianity produced on the world up to the period of the Reformation, in spite of the obstacles and opposition it met with during the middle ages. Part III. will contain an examination of the influence of the Reformation on the moral sentiments of mankind, and the institutions of society—first in the 16th century, and afterwards in the modification and progress of its principles, and of other collateral influences, down to the present time.

Such of your readers who wish to furnish themselves with copies, may be supplied at a lower price than what will be demanded by the booksellers from the public, if they will take the trouble to give their names and number of copies wanted, to Revds. B. T. Stannus, Edinburgh; W. Maccall, Greenock; H. Clarke, George Harris, and Messrs. Hedderwick & Son, Glasgow, by the middle, or at farthest, before the end of November, when the publication will take place.

W. B.

SALTCOATS, Oct. 1833.

*N. B.* The price for copies delivered as above, will be from 3s. to 4s. The Volume containing fully 300 pages, printed like your late edition of Channing's Evidences.

## THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

GLASGOW, NOVEMBER 1, 1833.

WE have devoted all our usual space, and given twelve pages additional this month, in order to gratify our readers with as full and accurate a report as possible, of the proceedings at the recent Anniversary of the Scottish Unitarian Christian Association. After all, we have not had room for the whole, nor have we given any adequate idea of the enthusiasm that pervaded the meeting. It was truly heart-cheering and animating, and its benevolent effects will be as permanent, we hope, as the feelings of joy were intense.

ON Friday, Sept. 27, died at Stapylton Grove, near Bristol, the Rajah RAMMOHUN ROY, after a few days' illness. Sincere and heartfelt have been the lamentations on his death. Mr. Harris delivered a discourse on the life, character, and writings of this extraordinary man, on Sunday afternoon, October 6, to a very crowded congregation, from the words "Know ye not that there is a Prince, and a Great Man fallen this day in Israel?"—2 Samuel iii. 38. So great was the interest excited, that in compliance with the wishes of many individuals unconnected with the Unitarian congregation, Mr. Harris re-delivered the sermon on Sunday evening, October 13. Many hundreds could not get into the chapel. The discourse was therefore again repeated on Sunday, Oct. 20, and even then there were more people outside of the chapel than there were within the building. On all the three occasions the discourse was listened to with deepest attention, and the sympathy of the audience strikingly evinced. It would probably have been again repeated, had not Mr. Harris announced a discourse on the life, character, and writings of Michael Servetus, for Sunday, Oct. 27, that being the anniversary of the day on which, at the instigation of Calvin, the martyr to the belief in God's Unity was burned at Geneva. Repeated and earnest requests have been made for the publication of the discourse, and might probably have been complied with, had not the sermons preached before the Association been in the press.

At Dunfermline, on Sunday, Oct. 13, to a crowded audience, and at Carlisle Oct. 20, Rev. H. Clarke preached a funeral discourse on the same melancholy occurrence.

Rev. William Maccafl of Greenock also delivered a sermon to the congregation of that town, on Sunday, Oct. 13, occasioned by the death of that illustrious individual.

Died, September 23, James Losh, Esq. Barrister at Law, and Recorder of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

“Thus has descended to the tomb, in the seventy-second year of his age, one of the worthiest men, and one of the brightest ornaments that Newcastle possessed, and whose place in society will long, we fear, remain unoccupied. High-minded, honourable, and independent in his public conduct,—warm-hearted, affectionate, and benevolent in private life,—and mild and unassuming in both, he was ardently beloved by his friends, and held in the highest estimation by all who had any intercourse with him. In him the poor and unfortunate were sure to find a liberal benefactor, not only with his purse, but what was frequently of infinitely more value, with his advice and professional assistance; and the grief which is now depicted in every countenance around his late abode, feelingly proclaims the loss of a kind master and indulgent landlord.—Eminently qualified by his talents and his extensive information, to take a lead in public affairs, Mr. Losh has long been looked up to as the head of the Whig party in this town, and has always shown himself the willing and the able advocate of every measure which had for its object the moral, political, or intellectual improvement of mankind. Accordingly, in almost every public meeting that has been held in this town during the last thirty years, whether of a local or a general character, whether to advance the cause of civil and religious liberty, to resist oppression, to reform the institutions of the country, to promote the spread of education and knowledge, to alleviate the sufferings of his fellow-creatures by acts of charity and benevolence, or to increase the prosperity and local advantages of the district in which he lived, Mr. Losh sustained a leading and an effective part. In early life he was an active member of the society of “the Friends of the People,” and in conjunction with the late Mr. Tierney, drew up the celebrated petition for Parliamentary Reform, which was presented by Mr. Grey in 1793.

Through the whole of his life he continued firmly attached to the same cause, and through good report and bad report, ever manfully and fearlessly maintained his principles, without regarding whom he might please or whom he might displease by so doing. He was also the author of several political publications of acknowledged merit, and had the good fortune to enjoy the friendship of most of the leading political characters of his time, with many of whom he maintained a regular correspondence.

"Mr. Losh, from his first settling in this town, was connected with the Society of Unitarians, in Hanover-Square, with whom he was a constant fellow-worshipper and communicant. Consequently, before the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, he declined an invitation he received from the Corporation of Berwick to become their Recorder; but by the repeal of those Acts he was enabled to accept the same office in the Corporation of this town, on the lamented death of his friend, C. Cookson, Esq. in May, 1832."

On Sunday, Oct. 6, a most impressive sermon was preached on the melancholy occasion, by the Rev. W. Turner, in the Unitarian Chapel, Hanover-Square, to a very crowded and deeply affected congregation. The reverend gentleman chose for his text, the 9th verse of the 39th Psalm, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it." He forcibly impressed upon his hearers the necessity of a patient resignation to the dispensations of Providence, as one of the principal duties of practical religion, and the propriety of making our earthly afflictions contribute to our eternal welfare, by weaning our affections from the allurements of this world, and fixing them upon eternity. In one part of the discourse, the rev. preacher adverted with much feeling to the excellent character of the deceased, and the many obligations which that congregation in particular were indebted to him for. They, he was sure, duly appreciated his worth, and deeply lamented the loss they had sustained; while most of those he was addressing, probably knew him, and all must have heard of him, as the polished gentleman, the enlightened philanthropist, and the upright Christian. We are happy to hear that the Sermon will shortly be published, accompanied with a biographical sketch of the deceased.

## THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER

Commenced its labours in 1826. It was instituted to uphold and diffuse and carry forward the great principles of the Reformation—the sufficiency of Scripture, the right of individual judgment, and of fearless free inquiry; to uproot alike bigotry and indifference; to free the mind from slavish subjection to human authority in religion, and the heart from the contracting influences of sectarian feeling; to advocate the rights of man, and inculcate the duties obligatory on all human beings to truth, liberty, and virtue, their fellow-creatures and their God; and thus to herald the universality of knowledge, freedom, and happiness.

The Seven Volumes now completing, contain a fund of information on many of the most interesting subjects of thought. Nearly the whole of CHANNING's essays and sermons are contained in them—the whole proceedings in relation to the conflict for Christian liberty in the Synod of Ulster—vindications of the truth and divine origin of Christianity—criticism and explanation of various passages of the Bible—illustrations and defences of the peerless perfections, undivided Unity, and essential unbounded benevolence of God—interesting and powerful articles on Education, Church Establishments, Methodism, Slavery—memoirs of Newton, Locke, Abauzit, Lindsey, Firmin, Emlyn, Biddle—and a record of facts marking the spread of opinions favourable to the emancipation of the body and mind of man from ignorance, slavery, bigotry, and superstition, and the establishment of moral and intellectual, individual and national independence and blessedness.

*On the 1st of January, 1834,*

The First Number of Vol. VIII. of THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER will be published.

Its pages will be increased to *forty-eight* monthly, printed with an entirely new type and on improved paper. Should the sale continue to increase, the pages will be still further extended; but on no account will the price be raised above its present amount, *Sixpence* each Number.

Believing that the only basis of individual and social happiness is to be found in the doctrines, precepts, and spirit of Christianity—that it advances and harmonises with all improvement, and is the charter of liberty to every human being—THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER will continue, as it has hitherto done, to advocate its truths in their purity and benevolence—to contend earnestly for all that can elevate human nature, and secure to it the unfettered exercise and undisturbed enjoyment of those privileges and that happiness which the Father of mercies intended for all the children of his love.

It is hoped that every present subscriber will endeavour to procure *one* in addition. Those who secure *twelve* shall receive a copy for themselves *gratis*. Information is requested to be addressed to the Editor, "Rev. GEORGE HARRIS, Glasgow," on or before the 12th December.

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER is published on the first of every Month, by R. HUNTER, 72 St. Paul's Church-yard; C. FOX, 67 Paternoster-Row; and J. MARDON, 19 St. Martin's le Grand, LONDON. Communications, or books for review, both of which are respectfully solicited, sent to Mr. Hunter, before the last day of each month, will reach the Editor in a few days afterwards.

THE  
CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

No. 88.      DECEMBER, 1833.      Vol. VII.

*The Evidences of Christianity. By William Ellery Channing, D. D.*

(Concluded from page 547.)

FIRST, I am to show, that revelation is founded on the authority of reason, and cannot, therefore, oppose or disparage it without subverting itself. Let me state a few of the considerations which convince me of the truth of this position. The first is, that reason alone makes us capable of receiving a revelation. It must previously exist and operate, or we should be wholly unprepared for the communications of Christ. Revelation, then, is built on reason. You will see the truth of these remarks, if you will consider to whom revelation is sent. Why is it given to men rather than to brutes? Why have not God's messengers gone to the fields to proclaim his glad tidings to bird and beast? The answer is obvious. These want reason; and wanting this, they have no capacity or preparation for revealed truth. And not only would revelation be lost on the brute; let it speak to the child before his rational faculties have been awakened, and before some ideas of duty and his own nature have been developed, and it might as well speak to a stone. Reason is the preparation and ground of revelation.

This truth will be still more obvious, if we consider not only to whom, but in what way the Christian revelation is communicated. How is it conveyed? In words. Did it make these words? No. They were in use ages before its birth. Again, I ask, Did it make the ideas or thoughts which these words express? No. If the hearers of Jesus had not previously attached ideas to the terms which he employed, they could not have received his meaning. He might as well have spoken to them in a foreign tongue. Thus the ideas which entered into Christianity, subsisted before. They were ideas of reason; so that to this faculty, revelation owes the materials of which it is composed.

Revelation, we must remember, is not our earliest teacher. Man is not born with the single power of reading God's word, and sent immediately to that guide. His eyes open first on another volume, that of the creation. Long before he can read the Bible, he looks round on the earth and sky. He reads the countenances of his friends, and hears and understands their voices. He looks, too, by degrees, within himself, and acquires some ideas of his own soul. Thus his first school is that of nature and reason, and this is necessary to prepare him for a communication from Heaven. Revelation does not find the mind a blank, a void prepared to receive unresistingly whatever may be offered; but finds it in possession of various knowledge from nature and ex-



periance, and still more in possession of great principles, fundamental truths, moral ideas, which are derived from itself, and which are the germs of all its future improvement. This last view is peculiarly important. The mind does not receive everything from abroad. Its great ideas arise from itself, and by those native lights, it reads and comprehends the volumes of nature and revelation. We speak, indeed, of nature and revelation as making known to us an intelligent first cause; but the ideas of intelligence and causation, we derive originally from our own nature. The elements of the idea of God, we gather from ourselves. Power, wisdom, love, virtue, beauty, and happiness, words which contain all that is glorious in the universe and interesting in our existence, express attributes of the mind, and are understood by us only through consciousness. It is true, these ideas or principles of reason, are often obscured by thick clouds, and mingled with many and deplorable errors. Still they are never lost. Christianity recognises them, is built on them, and needs them as its interpreters. If an illustration of these views be required, I would point you to what may be called the most fundamental idea of religion, I mean the idea of right, of duty. Do we derive this originally and wholly from sacred books? Has not every human being, whether born within or beyond the bounds of revelation, a sense of the distinction between right and wrong? Is there not an earlier voice than revelation, approving or rebuking men according to their deeds? In barbarous ages is not conscience heard? And does it not grow more articulate with the progress of society? Christianity does not create but presupposes the idea of duty, and the same may be said of other great convictions. Revelation, then, does not stand alone, nor is it addressed to a blank and passive mind. It was meant to be a joint worker with other teachers, with nature, with Providence, with conscience, with our rational powers; and as these are all given us by God, they cannot differ from each other. God must agree with himself. He has but one voice. It is man who speaks with jarring tongues. Nothing but harmony can come from the Creator; and accordingly, a religion, claiming to be from God, can give no surer proof of falsehood, than by contradicting those previous truths which God is teaching by our very nature. We have thus seen, that reason prepares us for a divine communication, and that it furnishes the ideas or materials of which revelation consists. This is my first consideration.

I proceed to a second. I affirm, then, that revelation rests on the authority of reason, because to this faculty it submits the evidences of its truth, and nothing but the approving sentence of reason binds us to receive and obey it. This is a very weighty consideration. Christianity, in placing itself before the tribunal of reason, and in resting its claims on the sanction of this faculty, is one of the chief witnesses to the authority and dignity of our rational nature. That I have ascribed to this faculty its true and proper office, may be easily made to appear. I take the New Testament in hand, and on what ground do I receive its truths as divine? I see nothing on its pages but the same letters in

which other books are written. No miraculous voice from Heaven assures me that it is God's word, nor does any mysterious voice within my soul command me to believe the supernatural works of Christ. How, then, shall I settle the question of the origin of this religion? I must examine it by the same rational faculties by which other subjects are tried. I must ask what are its evidences, and I must lay them before reason, the only power by which evidence can be weighed. I have not a distinct faculty given me for judging a revelation. I have not two understandings, one for inquiring into God's word, and another into his works. As with the same bodily eye I now look on the earth, now on the heavens; so with the same power of reason, I examine now nature, now revelation. Reason must collect and weigh the various proofs of Christianity. It must especially compare this system with those great moral convictions which are written by the finger of God on the heart, and which make man a law to himself. A religion subverting these, it must not hesitate to reject, be its evidences what they may. A religion, for example, commanding us to hate and injure society, reason must instantly discard, without even waiting to examine its proofs. From these views we learn, not only that it is the province of reason to judge of the truth of Christianity, but what is still more important, that the rules or tests by which it judges, are of its own dictation. The laws which it applies in this case, have their origin in itself. No one will pretend that revelation can prescribe the principles by which the question of its own truth should be settled; for until proved to be true, it has no authority. Reason must prescribe the tests or standards to which a professed communication from God should be referred; and among these, none are more important than that moral law which belongs to the very essence, and is the deepest conviction of the rational nature. Revelation, then, rests on reason, and in opposing it, would act for its own destruction.

I have given two views; I have shown, that revelation draws its ideas or materials from reason, and that it appeals to this power as the judge of its truth. I now assert, thirdly, that it rests on the authority of reason, because it needs and expects this faculty to be its interpreter, and without this aid, would be worse than useless. How is the right interpretation, the real meaning of the Scriptures to be ascertained? I answer, By reason. I know of no process by which the true sense of the New Testament is to pass from the page into my mind, without the use of my rational faculties. It will not be pretended that this book is so exceedingly plain, its words so easy, its sentences so short, its meaning so exposed on the surface, that the whole truth may be received in a moment, and without any intellectual effort. There is no such miraculous simplicity in the Scriptures. In truth, no book can be written so simply as to need no exercise of reason. Almost every word has more than one meaning, and judgment is required to select the particular sense intended by the writer. Of all books, perhaps the Scriptures need most the use of reason for their just interpretation; and this, not from

any imperfection, but from the strength, boldness, and figurative character of their style, and from the distance of the time when they were written. I open the New Testament, and my eye lights on this passage, "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee." Is this language to be interpreted in its plainest and most obvious sense? Then I must mutilate my body, and become a suicide. I look again, and I find Jesus using these words to the Jews, "Fill ye up the measure of your fathers." Am I to interpret this according to the letter, or the first ideas which it suggests? Then Jesus commanded his hearers to steep themselves in crime, and was himself a minister of sin. It is only by a deliberate use of reason, that we can penetrate beneath the figurative, hyperbolical, and often obscure style of the New Testament to the real meaning. Let me go to the Bible, dismissing my reason, and taking the first impression which the words convey, and there is no absurdity, however gross, into which I shall not fall. I shall ascribe a limited body to God, and unbounded knowledge to man; for I read of God having limbs and of man knowing all things. Nothing is plainer, than that I must compare passage with passage, and limit one by another; and, especially, limit all by those plain and universal principles of reason, which are called common sense, or I shall make revelation the patron of every folly and vice. So essential is reason to the interpretation of the Christian records. Revelation rests upon its authority. Can it then oppose it, or teach us to hold it in light esteem?

I have now furnished the proofs of my first position, that revelation is founded on reason; and in discussing this I have wished not only to support the main doctrine, but to teach you to reverence, more perhaps than you have done, your rational nature. This has been decried by theologians, until men have ceased to feel its sacredness and dignity. It ought to be regarded as God's greatest gift. It is his image within us. To renounce it, would be to offer a cruel violence to ourselves, to take our place among the brutes. Better pluck out the eye, better quench the light of the body, than the light within us. We all feel that the loss of reason, when produced by disease, is the most terrible calamity of life, and we look on a hospital for the insane, as the receptacle of the most pitiable of our race. But in one view, insanity is not so great an evil as the prostration of reason to a religious sect, or a religious chief; for the first is a visitation of Providence, the last is a voluntary act, the work of our own hands.

I am aware that those who have spoken most contemptuously of human reason, have acted from a good motive; their aim has been to exalt revelation. They have thought that by magnifying this as the only means of divine teaching, they were adding to its dignity. But truth gains nothing by exaggeration; and Christianity as we have seen is undermined by nothing more effectually, than by the sophistry which would bring discredit on our rational powers. Revelation needs no such support. For myself, I do not find that to esteem Christianity, I must think it the only source of instruction to which I must repair. I need

not make nature dumb to give power or attraction to the teaching of Christ. The last derives new interest and confirmation from its harmony with the first. Christianity would furnish a weapon against itself, not easily repelled, should it claim the distinction of being the only light vouchsafed by God to men, for in that case, it would represent a vast majority of the human race as left by their Creator without guidance or hope. I believe, and rejoice to believe, that a ray from heaven descends on the path of every fellow-creature. The heathen, though in darkness, when compared with the Christian, has still his light; and it comes from the same source as our own, just as the same sun dispenses now the faint dawn and now the perfect day. Let not nature's teaching be disparaged. It is from God as truly as his word. It is sacred as truly as revelation. Both are manifestations of One Infinite Mind, and harmonious manifestations; and without this agreement the claims of Christianity could not be sustained.

In offering these remarks, I have not forgotten that they will expose me to the reproach of ministering to "the pride of reason;" and I may be told that there is no worse form of pride than this. The charge is so common as to deserve a moment's attention. It will appear at once to be groundless, if you consider that pride finds its chief nourishment and delight in the idea of our own superiority. It is built on something peculiar and distinctive, on something which separates us from others, and raises us above them, and not on powers which we share with all around us. Now in speaking as I have done of the worth and dignity of reason, I have constantly regarded and represented this faculty as the common property of all human beings. I have spoken of its most important truths as universal and unconfined, such as no individual can monopolize or make the grounds of personal distinction or elevation. I have given, then, no occasion and furnished no nutriment to pride. I know indeed that the pride of reason or of intellect exists; but how does it chiefly manifest itself? Not in revering that rational nature, which all men have derived from God; but in exaggerating our particular acquisitions or powers, in magnifying our distinctive views, in looking contemptuously on other minds, in making ourselves standards for our brethren, in refusing new lights, and in attempting to establish dominion over the understandings of those who are placed within our influence. Such is the most common form of the pride of intellect. It is a vice confined to no sect, and perhaps will be found to prevail most where it is most disclaimed.

I doubt not that they who insist so continually on the duty of exalting Scripture above reason, consider themselves as particularly secured against the pride of reason. Yet none, I apprehend, are more open to the charge. Such persons are singularly prone to enforce their own interpretations of Scripture on others, and to see peril and crime in the adoption of different views from their own. Now let me ask, by what power do these men interpret revelation? Is it not by their reason? Have they any faculties

but the rational ones, by which to compare Scripture with Scripture, to explain figurative language, to form conclusions as to the will of God? Do they not employ on God's word the same intellect as on his works? And are not their interpretations of both, equally results of reason? It follows, that in imposing on others their explications of the Scriptures, they as truly arrogate to themselves a superiority of reason, as if they should require conformity to their explanations of nature. Nature and Scripture agree in this, that they cannot be understood at a glance. Both volumes demand patient investigation, and task all our powers of thought. Accordingly, it is well known, that as much intellectual toil has been spent on theological systems as on the natural sciences; and unhappily it is not less known, that as much intellectual pride has been manifested in framing and defending the first as the last. I fear, indeed, that this vice has clung with peculiar obstinacy to the students of revelation. No where, I fear, have men manifested such infatuated trust in their own infallibility, such overweening fondness for their own conclusions, such positiveness, such impatience of contradiction, such arrogance towards the advocates of different opinions, as in the interpretation of the Scriptures; and yet these very men, who so idolise their own intellectual powers, profess to humble reason, and consider a criminal reliance on it as almost exclusively chargeable on others. The true defence against the pride of reason, is not to speak of it contemptuously, but to reverence it as God's inestimable gift to every human being, and as given to all for never-ceasing improvements, of which we see but the dawn in the present acquisitions of the noblest mind.

I have now completed my views of the first principle which I laid down in this discourse,—namely, that the Christian revelation rests on the authority of reason. Of course it cannot oppose reason without undermining and destroying itself. I maintain, however, that it does not oppose, that it perfectly accords with reason. It is a rational religion. This is my second great position, and to this I ask your continued attention. This topic might easily be extended to a great length. I might state in succession, all the principles of Christianity, and show their accordance with reason. But I believe that more general views will be more useful; and such only can be given within the compass of a discourse.

In the account which I gave you of reason in the beginning of this discourse, I confined myself to two of its functions,—namely, its comprehension of universal truths, and the effort it constantly makes to reduce the thoughts to harmony or consistency. Universality and Consistency are among the chief attributes of reason. Do we find these in Christianity? If so, its claim to the character of a rational religion will be established. These tests I will therefore apply to it, and I will begin with Consistency.

That a religion be rational, nothing more is necessary than that its truths should consist or agree with one another, and with all other truths, whether derived from outward nature or our own souls. Now I affirm, that the Christian doctrines have this

agreement; and the more we examine, the more brightly this mark of truth will appear. I go to the Gospel, and I first compare its various parts with one another. Among these I find perfect harmony; and what makes this more remarkable, is, that Christianity is not taught systematically, or like a science. Jesus threw out, if I may so speak, his precepts and doctrines incidentally, or as they were required by the occasion, and yet, when they are brought together, they form a harmonious whole. I do not think it necessary to enlarge on this topic, because I believe it is not questioned by infidelity. I will name but one example of this harmony in Christianity. All its doctrines and all its precepts have that species of unity, which is most essential in a religion, that is, they all tend to one object. They all agree in a single aim or purpose, and that is to exalt the human character to a height of virtue never known before. Let the sceptic name, if he can, one Christian principle which has not a bearing on this end. A consistency of this kind is the strongest mark of a rational religion which can be conceived. Let me observe, in passing, that, besides this harmony of the Christian doctrines with one another, there is a striking and beautiful agreement between the teachings of Jesus and his character, which gives confirmation to both. Whatever Jesus taught, you may see embodied in himself. There is perfect unity between the system and its Founder. His life republished what fell from his lips. With his lips he enjoined earnestly, constantly, a strong and disinterested philanthropy; and how harmoniously and sublimely did his cross join with his word, in enforcing this exalted virtue. With his lips he taught the mercy of God to sinners; and of this attribute, he gave a beautiful illustration in his own deep interest in the sinful, in his free intercourse with the most fallen, and in his patient efforts to recover them to virtue, and to filial reliance on their Father in heaven. So, his preaching turned much on the importance of raising the mind above the world; and his own life was a constant renunciation of worldly interests, a cheerful endurance of poverty, that he might make many truly rich. So, his discourses continually revealed to man the doctrine of immortality; and in his own person, he brought down this truth to men's senses, by rising from the dead and ascending to another state of being. I have only glanced at the unity which subsists between Jesus and his religion. Christianity, from every point of view, will be found a harmonious system. It breathes throughout, one spirit and one purpose. Its doctrines, precepts, and examples, have the consistency of reason.

But this is not enough. A rational religion must agree, not only with itself, but with all other truths, whether revealed by the outward creation or our own souls. I take then Christianity into the creation, I place it by the side of nature. Do they agree? I say, Perfectly. I can discover nothing in what claims to be God's word, at variance with his works. This is a bright proof of the reasonableness of Christianity. When I consult nature with the lights modern science affords, I see continually multiplying traces of the doctrine of One God. The more I extend

my researches into nature, the more I see that it is a whole, the product of one wisdom, power, and goodness. It bears witness to One Author, nor has its testimony been without effect; for although the human mind has often multiplied its objects of worship, still it has always tended towards the doctrine of the Divine Unity, and has embraced it more and more firmly in the course of human improvement. The heathen, while he erected many altars, generally believed in one Supreme Divinity, to whom the inferior deities were subjected, and from whom they sprung. Need I tell you of the harmony which subsists between nature and revelation in this particular? To Christianity belongs the glory of having proclaimed this primitive truth with new power, and of having spread it over the whole civilized world. Again, nature gives intimation of another truth, I mean of the universal impartial goodness of God. When I look round on the creation, I see nothing to lead me to suspect that its Author confines his love to a few. The sun sends no brighter beam into the palace of the proudest king, than into the hut of the meanest peasant. The clouds select not one man's fields rather than his neighbour's, but shed down their blessings on rich and poor, and still more, on the just and the unjust. True, there is a variety of conditions among men, but this takes place, not by any interposition of God, but by fixed and general laws of nature. Impartial, universal goodness, is the character in which God is revealed by his works, when they are properly understood; and need I tell you how brightly this truth shines in the pages of Christianity, and how this religion has been the great means of establishing it among men? Again, when I look through nature, nothing strikes me more than the union which subsists among all its works. Nothing stands alone in the creation. The humblest plant has intimate connexions with the air, the clouds, the sun. Harmony is the great law of nature, and how strikingly does Christianity coincide here with God's works; for what is the design of this religion, but to bring the human race, the intelligent creation of God, into a harmony, union, peace, like that which knits together the outward universe? I will give another illustration. It is one of the great laws of nature, that good shall come to us through agents of God's appointment; that beings shall receive life, support, knowledge, and safety, through the interposition, and labours, and sufferings of others. Sometimes whole communities are rescued from oppression and ruin, chiefly by the efforts and sacrifices of a wise, disinterested, and resolute individual. How accordant with this ordination of nature is the doctrine of Christianity, that our heavenly Father having purposed our recovery from sin and death, has instituted for this end the agency and mediation of his Son; that he has given an illustrious deliverer to the world, through whose toils and sufferings we may rise to purity and immortal life. I say, then, that revelation is consistent with nature, when nature is truly interpreted by reason. I see it bringing out with noon-day brightness the truths which dawn in nature, so that it is reason in its most perfect form.

I have thus carried Christianity abroad into nature. I now

carry it within, and compare it with the human soul; and is it consistent with the great truths of reason which I discover there? I affirm that it is. When I look into the soul, I am at once struck with its immeasurable superiority to the body. I am struck with the contrast between these different elements of my nature—between this active soaring mind, and these limbs and material organs which tend perpetually to the earth, and are soon to be resolved into dust. How consistent is Christianity with this inward teaching. In Christianity, with what strength, with what bold relief is the supremacy of the spiritual nature brought out. What contempt does Jesus cast on the body and its interests, when compared with the redemption of the soul. Another great truth dawns upon me when I look within. I learn more and more that the great springs of happiness and misery are in the mind, and that the efforts of men to secure peace by other processes than by inward purification, are vain strivings; and Christianity is not only consistent with, but founded on this great truth; teaching us that the kingdom of heaven is within us, and proposing, as its great end, to rescue the mind from evil, and to endue it with strength and dignity worthy its divine origin. Again, when I look into the soul, I meet intimations of another great truth. I discern in it capacities which are not fully unfolded here. I see desires which find no adequate good on earth. I see a principle of hope always pressing forward into futurity. Here are marks of a nature not made wholly for this world; and how does Christianity agree with this teaching of our own souls? Its great doctrine is that of a higher life, where the spiritual germ within us will open for ever, and where the immortal good after which the mind aspires, will prove a reality. Had I time, I might survey distinctly the various principles of the soul—the intellectual, moral, social, and active; and might show you how Christianity accords with them all, enlarging their scope and energy, proposing to them nobler objects, and aiding their development by the impulse of a boundless hope. But, commending these topics to your private meditation, I will take but one more view of the soul. When I look within, I see stains of sin, and fears, and forebodings of guilt; and how adapted to such a nature is Christianity, a religion which contains blood-sealed promises of forgiveness to the penitent, and which proffers heavenly strength to fortify us in our conflict with moral evil. I say, then, Christianity consists with the nature within us, as well as with nature around us. The highest truths in respect to the soul, are not only responded to, but are carried out by Christianity, so that it deserves to be called the perfection of reason.

I have now shown, in a variety of particulars, that Christianity has the character of consistency, and thus satisfies the first demand of reason. It does not divide the mind against itself—does not introduce discord into the intellect, by proposing doctrines which our consciousness and experience repel. But these views do not exhaust the present topic. It is not enough to speak of Christianity, as furnishing views which harmonise with one another, and with all known truth. It gives a new and cheering con-



sistency to the views with which we are furnished by the universe. Nature and providence, with all their beauty, regularity, and beneficence, have yet perplexing aspects. Their elements are often seen in conflict with one another. Sunshine and storms, pleasure and pain, success and disaster, abundance and want, health and sickness, life and death, seem to ordinary spectators to be mixed together confusedly and without aim. Reason desires nothing so earnestly, so anxiously, as to solve these discordant appearances—as to discover some great, central reconciling truth, around which they may be arranged, and from which they may borrow light and harmony. This deep want of the rational nature Christianity has supplied. It has disclosed a unity of purpose in the seemingly hostile dispensations of Providence, and opened to the mind a new world of order, beauty, and benevolent design. Christianity, revealing, as it does, the unbounded mercy of God to his sinful creatures—revealing an endless futurity, in which the inequalities of the present state are to be redressed, and which reduces, by its immensity, the sorest pains of life to light and momentary evils—revealing a Moral Perfection, which is worth all pain and conflicts, and which is most effectually and gloriously won amidst suffering and temptation; revealing in Jesus Christ the sublimity and rewards of tried and all-enduring virtue, revealing in him the founder of a new moral kingdom or power, which is destined to subdue the world to God; and proffering the Holy Spirit to all who strive to build up in themselves and others the reign of truth and virtue—Christianity, I say, by these revelations, has poured a flood of light over nature and providence, and harmonised the infinite complexity of the works and ways of God. Thus it meets the first want of the rational nature, the craving for consistency of views. It is reason's most effectual minister and friend. Is it not, then, eminently a rational faith?

Having shown that Christianity has the character of consistency, I proceed to the second mark or stamp of reason on a religion, that is, Universality; and this I claim for Christianity. This indeed is one of the most distinguishing features of our religion, and so obvious and striking as to need little illustration. When I examine the doctrines, precepts, and spirit of Christianity, I discover in them all this character of Universality; I discover nothing narrow, temporary, local. The Gospel bears the stamp of no particular age or country. It does not concern itself with the perishable interests of communities or individuals; but appeals to the spiritual, immortal, unbounded principle in human nature. Its aim is to direct the mind to the Infinite Being and to an infinite good. It is not made up, like other religions, of precise forms and details; but it inculcates immutable and all-comprehending principles of duty, leaving every man to apply them for himself to the endless variety of human conditions. It separates from God, the partial, limited views of Judaism and heathenism, and holds him forth in the sublime attributes of the Universal Father. In like manner, it inculcates philanthropy without exceptions or bounds; a love to man as man, a love founded on that immortal nature of which all men partake, and

which binds us to recognise in each, a child of God and a brother. The spirit of bigotry, which confines its charity to a sect, and the spirit of aristocracy, which looks on the multitude as an inferior race, are alike rebuked by Christianity, which eighteen hundred years ago, in a narrow and superstitious age, taught, what the present age is beginning to understand, that all men are essentially equal, and that all are to be honoured, because made for immortality, and endued with capacities of ceaseless improvement. The more I examine Christianity, the more I am struck with its universality. I see in it a religion made for all regions and all times—for all classes and all stages of society. It is fitted not to the Asiatic or the European, but to the essential principles of human nature—to man under the tropical or polar skies—to all descriptions of intellect and condition. It speaks a language which all men need, and all can understand; enjoins a virtue which is man's happiness and glory in every age and clime; and ministers consolations and hopes, which answer to man's universal lot, to the sufferings, the fear, and the self-rebuke, which cleave to our nature in every outward change. I see in it, the light, not of one nation, but of the world; and a light reaching beyond the world, beyond time, to higher modes of existence, and to an interminable futurity. Other religions have been intended to meet the exigences of particular countries or times, and therefore society in its progress has outgrown them; but Christianity meets more and more the wants of the soul, in proportion to the advancement of our race, and thus proves itself to be eternal truth. After these remarks, may I not claim for Christianity that character of universality which is the highest distinction of reason? To understand fully the confirmation which these views give to the Gospel, you must compare it with the religions prevalent in the age of Christ, all of which bore the marks of narrow local, temporary institutions. How striking the contrast. And how singular the fact, that amid this darkness there sprang up a religion so consistent and universal as to deserve to be called the perfection of reason!

I do and must feel, my friends, that the claim of Christianity to the honour of being a rational religion, is fully established. As such I commend it to you. As such it will more and more approve itself, in proportion as you study and practise it. You will never find cause to complain, that, by adopting it, you have enslaved or degraded your highest powers. Here, then, I might stop, and might consider my work as done. But I am aware that objections have been made to the rational character of our religion, which may still linger in the minds of some of my hearers. A brief notice of these may aid the purpose, and will form a proper conclusion of this discourse.

I imagine, that were some who are present, to speak, they would tell me, that if Christianity be judged by its fruits, it deserves any character but that of rational. I should be told, that no religion has borne a more abundant harvest of extravagance and fanaticism. I should be told, that reason is a calm, reflecting, sober principle; and I should be asked, whether such

is the character of the Christianity which has overspread the world. Perhaps some of you will remind me, of the feverish, wild, passionate religion, which is now systematically dispersed through our country; and I shall be asked, whether a system under which such delusions prevail, can be a rational one.

To these objections, I answer, You say much that is true. I grant, that reason is a calm and reflecting principle, and I see little calmness or reflection among many who take exclusively the name of Christ. But I say, you have no right to confound Christianity with its professors. This religion, as you know, has come down to us through many ages of darkness, during which, it must have been corrupted and obscured. Common candour requires, that you should judge of it as it came from its Founder. Go, then, to its original records, place yourself near Jesus, and tell me, if you ever found yourselves in the presence of so calm a teacher. We, indeed, discern in Jesus great earnestness, but joined with entire self-control. Sensibility breathes through his whole teaching and life, but always tempered with wisdom. Amidst his boldest thoughts and expressions, we discover no marks of ungoverned feeling or a diseased imagination. Take, as an example, his longest discourse, the Sermon on the Mount. How weighty the thoughts! How grave and dignified the style! You recollect that the multitude were astonished, not at the passionate vehemence, but at the authority with which he spoke. Read next, the last discourse of Jesus to his disciples, in St. John's Gospel. What a deep, yet mild and subdued tenderness mingles with conscious greatness in that wonderful address! Take what is called the Lord's Prayer, which Jesus gave as the model of all prayer to God. Does that countenance fanatical fervour or violent appeals to our Creator? Let me further ask, Does Jesus any where place religion in tumultuous, ungoverned emotion? Does he not teach us, that obedience, not feeling, marks and constitutes true piety, and that the most-acceptable offering to God, is to exercise mercy to our fellow-creatures? When I compare the clamorous preaching and passionate declamation, too common in the Christian world, with the composed dignity, the deliberate wisdom, the freedom from all extravagance, which characterised Jesus, I can imagine no greater contrast, and I am sure that the fiery zealot is no representative of Christianity.

I have done with the first objection; but another class of objections is often urged against the reasonable character of our religion. It has been strenuously maintained, that Christianity contains particular doctrines which are irrational, and which involve the whole religion to which they are essential, in their own condemnation. To this class of objections I have a short reply. I insist that these offensive doctrines do not belong to Christianity, but are human additions, and therefore do not derogate from its reasonableness and truth. What is the doctrine most frequently adduced to fix the charge of irrationality on the Gospel? It is the Trinity. This is pronounced by the unbeliever, a gross offence to reason. It teaches that there is one God, and yet that there are three divine persons. According to the doctrine, these

three persons perform different offices, and sustain different relations to each other. One is Father, another his Son. One sends, another is sent. They love each other, converse with each other, and make a covenant with each other; and yet with all these distinctions, they are, according to the doctrine, not different beings, but one being—one and the same God. Is this a rational doctrine?—has often been the question of the objector to Christianity. I answer, No. I can as easily believe that the whole human race are one man, as that three infinite persons, performing such different offices, are one God. But I maintain, that because the Trinity is irrational, it does not follow that the same reproach belongs to Christianity, for this doctrine is no part of the Christian religion. I know there are passages which are continually quoted in its defence; but allow me to prove doctrines in the same way, that is, by detaching texts from their connexion, and interpreting them without reference to the general current of Scripture; and I can prove any thing and every thing from the Bible. I can prove that God has human passions. I can prove transubstantiation, which is taught much more explicitly than the Trinity. Detached texts prove nothing. Christ is called God; the same title is given to Moses and to rulers. Christ has said, "I and my Father are one;" so he prayed that all his disciples might be one, meaning not one and the same being, but one in affection and purpose. I ask you, before you judge on this point, to read the Scriptures as a whole, and to inquire into their general strain and teaching in regard to Christ. I find him uniformly distinguishing between himself and God, calling himself—not God the Son, but—the Son of God, continually speaking of himself as sent by God, continually referring his power and miracles to God. I hear him saying, that of himself he can do nothing, and praying to his Father under the character of the only true God. Such I affirm to be the tenor, the current, the general strain of the New Testament; and the scattered passages on which a different doctrine is built, should have no weight against this host of witnesses. Do not rest your faith on a few texts. Sometimes these favourite texts are no part of Scripture. For example, the famous passage on which the Trinity mainly rests, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one,"—this text, I say, though found at present in John's Epistle, and read in our churches, has been pronounced, by the ablest critics, a forgery; and a vast majority of the educated ministers of this country, are satisfied that it is not a part of Scripture. Suffer no man, then, to select texts for you as decisive of religious controversies. Read the whole Record for yourselves, and possess yourselves of its general import. I am very desirous to separate the doctrine in question from Christianity, because it fastens the charge of irrationality on the whole religion. It is one of the great obstacles to the propagation of the Gospel. The Jews will not hear of a Trinity. I have seen in the countenance, and heard in the tones of the voice, the horror with which that people

shrink from the doctrine that God died on the cross. Mahometans, too, when they hear this opinion from Christian missionaries, repeat the first article of their faith, "There is one God;" and look with pity and scorn on the disciples of Jesus, as deserters of the plainest and greatest truth of religion. Even the Indian of our wilderness, who worships the Great Spirit, has charged absurdity on the teacher who has gone to indoctrinate him in a Trinity. How many, too, in Christian countries, have suspected the whole religion for this one error. Believing, then, as I do, that it forms no part of Christianity, my allegiance to Jesus Christ calls me openly to withstand it. In so doing, I would wound no man's feelings. I doubt not that they who adopt this doctrine, intend equally with those who oppose it, to render homage to the truth, and service to Christianity. They think that their peculiar faith gives new interest to the character, and new authority to the teaching of Jesus. But they grievously err. The views by which they hope to build up love towards Christ, detract from the perfection of his Father; and I fear that the kind of piety which prevails now in the Christian world, bears witness to the sad influence of this obscuration of the true glory of God. We need not desert reason, or corrupt Christianity, to ensure the purest, deepest love towards the only true God, or towards Jesus Christ whom he has sent for our redemption.

I have named one doctrine, which is often urged against Christianity as irrational. There is one more on which I would offer a few remarks. Christianity has often been reproached with teaching, that God brings men into life totally depraved, and condemns immense multitudes to everlasting misery, for sins to which their nature has irresistibly impelled them. This is said to be irrational, and consequently such must be the religion which teaches it. I certainly shall not attempt to vindicate this theological fiction. A more irrational doctrine could not, I think, be contrived; and it is something worse—it is as immoral in its tendency, as it is unreasonable. It is suited to alienate men from God, and from one another. Were it really believed, which it cannot be, men would look up with dread and detestation to the Author of their being, and look round with horror on their fellow-creatures. It would dissolve society. Were men to see in one another wholly corrupt beings, incarnate fiends, without one genuine virtue, society would become as repulsive as a den of lions, or a nest of vipers. All confidence, esteem, love, would die; and without these, the interest, charm, and worth of existence would expire. What a pang would shoot through a parent's heart, if he were to see in the smiling infant a moral being continually and wholly prone to sin, in whose mind were thickly sown the seeds of hatred to God and goodness, and who had commenced his existence under the curse of his Creator! What good man could consent to be a parent, if his offspring were to be born to this infinitely wretched inheritance? I say, the doctrine is of immoral tendency; but I do not say, that they who profess it are immoral. The truth is, that none do or can hold it in its full and proper import. I have seen its advocates smile as benignantly on

the child whom their creed has made a demon, as if it were an angel; and I have seen them mingling with their fellow-creatures as cordially and confidently, as if the doctrine of total depravity had never entered their ears. Perhaps the most mischievous effect of the doctrine is, the dishonour which it has thrown on Christianity. This dishonour I would wipe away. Christianity teaches no such doctrine. Where do you find it in the New Testament? Did Jesus teach it when he took little children in his arms, and blessed them, and said "of such is the kingdom of God?" Did Paul teach it when he spoke of the Gentiles who have not the law or a written revelation, but who do by nature the things contained in the law? Christianity indeed speaks strongly of human guilt, but always treats men as beings who have the power of doing right, and who have come into existence under the smile of their Creator.

I have now completed my vindication of the claim of the Gospel to the character of a rational religion; and my aim has been, not to serve a party, but the cause of our common Christianity. At the present day, one of the most urgent duties of its friends, is to rescue it from the reproach of waging war with reason. The character of our age demands this. There have been times, when Christianity, though loaded with unreasonable doctrines, retained its hold on men's faith; for men had not learned to think. They received their religion as children learn the Catechism; they substituted the priest for their own understandings, and cared neither what nor why they believed. But that day is gone by, and the spirit of freedom which has succeeded it, is subjecting Christianity to a scrutiny more and more severe; and if this religion cannot vindicate itself to the reflecting, the calm, the wise, as a reasonable service, it cannot stand. Fanatical sects may for a time spread an intolerant excitement through a community, and impose silence on the objections of the sceptical. But fanaticism is the epidemic of a season, it wastes itself by its own violence. Sooner or later the voice of reflection will be heard. Men will ask, What are the claims of Christianity? Does it bear the marks of truth? And if it be found to war with nature and reason, it will be, and it ought to be, abandoned. On this ground, I am anxious that Christianity should be cleared from all human additions and corruptions. If, indeed, irrational doctrines belong to it, then I have no desire to separate them from it. I have no desire, for the sake of upholding the Gospel, to wrap up and conceal, much less to deny any of its real principles. Did I think that it was burdened with one irrational doctrine, I would say so; and I would leave it as I found it, with this millstone round its neck. But I know none such. I meet, indeed, some difficulties in the narrative part of the New Testament; and there are arguments in the Epistles, which, however suited to the Jews to whom they were first addressed, are not apparently adapted to men at large; but I see not a principle of the religion, which my reason, calmly and impartially exercised, pronounces inconsistent with any great truth. I have the strongest conviction, that Christianity is reason in its most perfect form,

and therefore I plead for its disengagement from the irrational additions with which it has been clogged for ages.

With these views of Christianity, I do, and I must hold it fast. I cannot surrender it to the cavils or scoffs of infidelity. I do not blush to own it, for it is a rational religion. It satisfies the wants of the intellect, as well as those of the heart. I know that men of strong minds have opposed it. But, as if Providence intended that their sophistry should carry a refutation on its own front, they have generally fallen into errors so gross and degrading, as to prove them to be any thing rather than the apostles of reason. When I go from the study of Christianity to their writings, I feel as if I were passing from the warm bright sun, into a chilling twilight, which too often deepens into utter darkness. I am not, then, ashamed of the Gospel. I see it glorified by the hostile systems which are reared for its destruction. I follow Jesus, because he is eminently "the Light;" and I doubt not, that to his true disciples, he will be a guide to that world, where the obscurities of our present state will be dispersed, and where reason as well as virtue will be unfolded, under the quickening influence and in the more manifest presence of God.

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*On Professor Stuart's Letters to Rev. Dr. Channing.*  
(Concluded from page 343.)

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Allowing this, in the first instance, merely to give an idea of what I suppose meant by John, in his use of the term, I cannot better satisfy you, perhaps, that this, or something like it, is the truth, than by a slight paraphrase on his words; by which you will see how the idea accords with his original expressions, and how it may illustrate their import to persons in our day, who are puzzled with the various inferences drawn from them.

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Verse 1. In the beginning was the Word.—It came forth from God, for the Word was a manifestation of God.—2. Such a manifestation of his presence was made, at the creation of the world, by God.—3. For (in the natural world) all things were made by his Word, and without it was not any thing made that was made.—4. Again (in the moral world) God was light, and this light is the source of all spiritual life in man.\*—5. And this light shone in the

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\* It will be observed, that I have here transposed the words *light* and *life*. For this conjectural emendation of the text, I confess I have no other authority than the internal probability arising from the structure of the *whole* argument. But I do not insist upon it. My leading idea will remain, although the words are retained in their common position. In that case, the meaning seems to be—that the moral influence of the Holy Spirit is the proper source of spiritual knowledge: "He that doeth the will of God, shall know his doctrine."

darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not.—6. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.—7. He came for a witness to testify concerning that light, that men might be induced to receive it.—8. Neither John's doctrine nor character exhibited a full display of that light, as was to be afterwards done by Messiah. He was only a witness to it.—9. Nevertheless, it was by this same and only true light (coming from God) that every prophet and wise man who had ever been in the world, were enlightened (according to their measure).—10. This light or word of God, had always been in the world (and as we have seen), the world was made by it, yet the world regarded it not.—11. Yea, certain special, though partial manifestations of it, were made at sundry times and in divers manners, to the chosen people of God, yet even the Israelites in general received it not.—12. But as many as did receive it, obtained power to become the sons of God—even all those who believed its doctrine.—13. Being born, not by natural generation, nor of the will of man, but of God.—14. But this light or word was at length fully manifested by Jesus of Nazareth—the Spirit of God resting on him “without measure”—“the Father dwelling in him” constantly; so that he became the living Temple of God—the Christ—the Messiah; and thus exhibited *in the flesh*, or in human nature,—the Image of God, full of grace and truth (perfect in virtue and knowledge); and we beheld his glory—a glory peculiar to himself, as the only begotten and beloved Son of God, who did and taught always the things which his Father approved.—17. The sovereignty of Jehovah had indeed been declared by the law of Moses, but the grace and truth of our Heavenly Father, was revealed by Jesus Christ.—18. For no man—not even Moses, had seen God at any time, in all the moral perfections of his glory—but the only begotten Son, who knew the Father intimately, he hath revealed him to man.

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The idea here held forth, of the divine nature of Christ, is, I hope, perfectly distinct, and in the highest degree honourable, although I do not attempt to define it by precise dogmas, after the manner of the Trinitarians, and other scholastic theologians. But it certainly involves nothing like a plurality of persons in the Deity.

The only freedom I have used with the text, is, in



assuming that the use of the personal pronoun by John, is a figure of speech, or a personification, such as is common in Oriental languages, and in various passages of Scripture. He was led to this in consequence of mentioning the Word, as, in a certain sense, distinguished from God. It was like the audible word or visible act of a man *showing* the man; but yet (as if to correct any false impression) he adds, "and the Word was God." Observe, he does not say, as a Trinitarian would have said, "And the Word was the second person of the Godhead;" or it was the Son—such an idea is not contained in John's words, it is a pure inference or theory to account for the use of the personal pronoun.

But this explanation of a figurative personification, is surely as simple as such a theory, and as consistent with the text; for the idea of a plurality of *real persons* being meant by John in the foregoing passage, is just as completely a matter of theory or *supposition*, as the idea of a figurative personification. Some latitude must be given to his language either way, and our preference of the one explanation before the other, ought to be grounded simply upon their respective probability. Now the idea of a figurative personification, was familiar to the readers of the Old Testament, as in the case of Wisdom in the Proverbs of Solomon; but the idea of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, was unquestionably a notion entirely new to the Jews. Christian theologians have indeed imagined they can find traces of it in the Old Testament; but such interpretations, certainly, had not occurred to the Jews before the Christian era; and afterwards, it equally is certain, that all the Jews who refused Christianity, denied that they or their fathers ever had such an idea. As such, the abstract notion of the Deity, therefore, consisting of more persons than one, must have appeared a novelty in *that age*, we ought to assume the more simple and obvious interpretation of John's words. Looking at them *back* through the medium of scholastic systems and prejudices, we may find some semblance of support to the doctrine of a plurality of persons; but the true interpretation, is most probably that which his words would have suggested to those who lived in the age in which he wrote.

The fact is, that in the age of the Apostles, the dogmas and definitions of the scholastic theology about the

Trinity were unknown, and all that John could have in view, was to illustrate the *extraordinary* constitution of the character of Christ above that of all other men; and that is surely done sufficiently, by informing us, that the divine spirit, energy, word, or light and life of God, dwelt in Jesus, or was united to him in the fullest manner, so as to make him a perfect man—a perfect moral image of God, and a sufficient Saviour of the world. This is what we want, and what it concerns us to know.

If the above idea of the divine nature of Christ (which I have endeavoured rather to illustrate than to define) be the true one—then we know likewise how to explain those few passages in some of the Epistles, wherein the creation of the world seems to be ascribed to Christ. It was the Word which dwelt in Jesus and *made him the Christ*—it was that Eternal Word, “which was God,” by which all things were made. They were not made by the *person* who was afterwards sanctified and qualified by it, in a miraculous manner to deliver the world from ignorance, sin, and misery. The creation and the salvation or regeneration of the world, were effected by the same power; but in the work of creation, no intermediate agent was employed that we know of. In its moral salvation and regeneration, the agent was or is Jesus; in which respect, and on which account, he was and is the Christ—the Son of God—the image, representative, and vicegerent of God to man, in regard to all his moral interests and his ultimate destiny. But through him and beyond him, we still look up to the one God, the Father and Fountain of all existence and well-being, to whom be glory for ever.

SALTCOATS.

W. B.

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*To the Editor of the Christian Pioneer.*

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SIR,—Your Correspondents (p. 433) have nearly exhausted a subject of some importance, very fairly proposed for discussion. Yet, give me leave to refer once more to the work, from which I parted abruptly (p. 482).

Immediately after the passage Mr. Yates (p. 374) has quoted from Dr. Toulmin, the author of the fourth treatise adds (p. 235), as on the authority of Socinus himself, “He would have heretics punished as well as furious and mad men. Although these last deserve compassion, never-

theless, when they hurt others, they are restrained; and if it be necessary, they are chained. Thus heretics deserve pity. We ought, nevertheless, to hinder the efforts they make for the propagation of their doctrine; and if this cannot be prevented by any other methods, then even chains and prisons must be employed."

This paragraph is quoted by Dr. Toulmin (p. 95), as you will readily perceive, a version sufficiently exact of a passage in a letter from Socinus, "ad clarissimum virum Martinum Vadovitam, Academiæ Cracoviensis Professore," written June 14, 1598, in the maturity of judgment, nineteen years after the fatal termination of David's imprisonment, and within six years of the writer's decease.

Socinus, however, further explains himself in the next sentence, as proposing these severe restraints only in the case of obstinate heretics—the *slang* of all persecutors, Christian, Jew, or Heathen, whether uttered in Council, Assembly, or on the Proconsular throne. Thus Pliny, in his famous rescript to the Emperor Trajan, declares how the Christian heretics from Pagan orthodoxy, who would not abjure their religion, were justly punished for inflexible obstinacy.

That "Socinus rose far above the prevailing spirit of his age," is not, I fear, the fair result of the late investigation, as your Correspondent who introduced it, will, I am persuaded, readily, though reluctantly, admit. The Polish Reformer rose, however, to the height of Luther, who says, as quoted by Chandler, (*Hist. Pers.* p. 310), "Heretics may be corrected, and forced at least to silence;" and again, "Heretics are not indeed to be put to death, but may be confined, and shut up in some certain place, and put under restraint, as madmen."

There was, indeed, among the contemporaries of Luther, one who appeared as a "light shining in a dark place," exciting the bitter wrath, though happily saved from the sanguinary purpose of Calvin, while he "rose far above the spirit of his age." This was Sebastian Castellio, of whom I may one day offer you an account.

CIVIS RUSTICUS.

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### *The Unknown Tongues.*

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SIR,—In reading the newspaper accounts of the doings of Tait, and Carlyle, and Irvine, and their male and

female assistants, I have very often found the question, "Is this insanity the legitimate result of genuine Trinitarianism?"—urging itself upon my consideration. Since Christian Unitarianism was promulgated by Jesus Christ, its blessed author, has it never been known to make a religious maniac. Its opponents did indeed affirm that Christ and Paul were mad, and its enemies, in subsequent periods, have asserted that the worshippers of that only God the Father, whom Christ and Paul worshipped, are heretics; but they have never been able to point out a single votary of this Christian worship who was driven to insanity by his religious opinions. But amongst Trinitarians, wild fanatics and outrageous religious maniacs are incessantly appearing. The fair, if not only conclusion, is, they are the natural fruits of the system, and of these fruits I present you with a few specimens.

In 1535, John Leyden proclaimed himself a prophet, and announced that he had a commission from heaven to predict that the siege of the city of Munster would be raised by the ensuing Easter. Many believed in him, and he was by some declared to be the King of the Universe. His predictions, however, were not accomplished, and his claims of course fell to the ground.

In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, John Hacket set up for an inspired person, and commenced his prophecy in York and Lincoln. He predicted that Popery would cease in the year 1591, and that in the same year there should be great wars, and famine, and pestilence. He sent forth two messengers, Coppinger and Arthington, to declare that Christ was immediately coming to judgment. They claimed for their master the title of supreme Lord and King of Europe, and maintained that all the Princes and Potentates of that portion of the earth were his dependents. Coppinger styled himself the Prophet of Mercy, and Arthington the Prophet of Judgment. From the country, these fanatics went to London. There the two disciples took great pains to make known their leader's qualifications, and even proceeded so far as to announce that Jesus Christ was come, and that he lodged at a certain house which they named. Hacket acquiesced in the announcement, and when he appeared amongst the crowds, he used to tell them, that he had so much influence with his Father, that if all human beings should pray for rain, and he should request God not to send it, there

no rain; and in his prayers, he used to say, "I Father, that thou lovest me equally with thyself." At length they were arrested, imprisoned, and tried for blasphemy. Hacket was condemned to be hung, and was executed on the 28th July, 1592. Coppinger fasted himself in prison, and Arthington was pardoned.

In 1708, John Lacy, who had for some time professed to be able to walk on the water and in the air, and to work all kinds of miracles, announced that he intended to raise Dr. Emis from the dead. Dr. Emis had died on the 22d December, 1707, and was buried in Bunhill-Fields, Moorfields. Lacy said that as the unbelievers objected to the resurrection of Lazarus, that the time of his lying in the grave was too short, he would allow Dr. Emis to remain five months, at the expiration of which time he would proceed to the grave, and standing thereby from 12 o'clock at noon to 6 o'clock of the 25th of May, 1708, he would then be joined by a great host of angels, who would defend him and his companions, and Dr. Emis should be brought again to life, and instantly all unbelievers should be destroyed. It hardly need to be added, that although the civil authorities were in attendance, to prevent the multitude from interfering with Lacy's proceedings, the dead man was not restored to life.

No doubt, the modern Prophets, Prophetesses, and utterers of unknown tongues, would tell us that Leyden, and Hacket, and Lacy, were either sadly deluded or basely intended to delude. But they gave just as good evidence of being inspired as any of those of our own times can furnish. That is, they gave evidence of believing in an irrational system, and of following it out to its consequences. They gave evidence of believing in the Trinitarian dogmas respecting the personal presence of our Lord, and the supernatural influences of the Holy Spirit. And who that believes in the doctrine, that the Holy Spirit acts supernaturally upon the human mind, can deny unknown tongues, and unheard of visions, and be consistent? Only think of the absurdity of a man saying, I believe the Spirit operates upon the mind irrespective of man's reason, and independent of man's will; and yet my reason tells me, that the Spirit cannot play the freaks which are exhibited in London and Edinburgh. If what are the manifestations of the Spirit, must be decided by reason in one case, reason must decide in all. Then must

it be decided, that all the reveries and conceits which are so lamentably common amongst the professors of religion, are no more the work of the Holy Spirit than are the ravings of the Carlyles and Andersons, the Irvines and Campbells; or than were those of Leyden, Hacket, and Lacy.

H. C.

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## THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER.

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GLASGOW, NOVEMBER 30, 1833.

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*The following article appeared in the Chronicle, Argus, Free Press, and Scots Times Newspapers of this City:—*

SIR,—In the Scottish Guardian of this morning, among the “Notices to Correspondents,” is the following—“The Letter of G. H. cannot appear.” That letter was from myself. As I consider it an act of injustice, an insult added to injury, that its insertion was refused, I respectfully appeal to the public of this city, through the pages of your truly liberal journal.

Knowing the misrepresentations under which the principles of Christian Unitarianism labour, some members of my congregation thought it right to undeceive the public, by circulating a statement of those principles. Accordingly, a small pamphlet was issued, entitled “The Christian Visitor, No. I.” and left at many hundred houses in the city. The Scottish Guardian noticed the pamphlet in these terms:—

“*Socinianism.*—We would warn our readers against an *insidious* Socinian publication, circulated gratuitously in town, under the title of ‘The Christian Visitor.’ This publication assumes the name of another and a very different publication, circulated by the Tract Society; and we understand that money has been given to the distributor, under the impression that he was the agent of the Tract Society.”

This paragraph having been pointed out to me, I thought it my duty to correct its misstatements. I therefore addressed the following letter to the Editor of the Scottish Guardian:—

“Sir,—There is a paragraph in your last week’s paper, which, if not corrected, will mislead the public.



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Vol VII

Vol VII  
No. 2

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GEORGE HARRIS.

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" 'The Christian Visitor' is NOT a 'Socinian' publication. The individual who drew it up is *not a Socinian*. It is believed there are no Socinians now in existence. The term 'Socinian' is now a nickname, and is considered an epithet of reproach by a numerous and intelligent portion of Christian believers, to whom it is often in ignorance or bigotry applied. Their correct appellation is Christian, or Unitarian Christian.

" 'The Christian Visitor' does NOT 'assume the name of another and a very different publication, circulated by the Tract Society.' The title of that work is, 'The Glasgow Monthly Visitor.' It is printed also on a different sized paper.

" Money *was* in *one* instance given to the distributor of 'The Christian Visitor.' He stated *before it was given*, that the Tract he was leaving was different from those commonly circulated. If, however, the money was given in mistake, it will be returned to the donor, on application to the undersigned.

" 'The Christian Visitor' is NOT an 'insidious' publication. The religious sentiments its author believes, are stated in the language of Scripture, because he knows no better form of words in which to express his faith. *It is his faith because it is Scriptural.* He would rejoice did every Christian disciple adhere alone to the teachings of the Saviour and his Apostles.

" When the Unitarians send an advertisement to the Scottish Guardian of their Anniversary Meeting, it is refused;—when they circulate a statement of their doctrines in the language of Scripture, the public are warned against the 'insidious' publication! Whether such conduct be consistent with the professions of attachment to Civil and Religious Liberty, with which the Scottish Guardian began its labours, the public will judge.

GEORGE HARRIS."

" 51, West Regent-Street, Oct. 25, 1833."

After having been thus informed of the incorrectness of the paragraph, in various particulars—after having wrongly charged the distributor of "The Christian Visitor" with receiving money under false pretences—after being informed that the money would be returned if applied for, the Editor of the Scottish Guardian nevertheless chooses to allow the erroneous impressions his statements have made, still to remain on the public mind! The motto of

the paper affirms, "The people of Great Britain are a free and a religious people, and by the blessing of God I will lend my aid to keep them so." If this be a specimen of the "aid to keep them so," the people may well pray to be preserved from its assistance. In the prospectus of the *Scottish Guardian*, it is said, "that when Charles II. let himself out, he was wont to say that the reformation of religion had been a bad precedent, for men having once taken the liberty to spy into abuses in sacred things, proceeded with less reverence to spy into those of their governments." The projectors of the newspapers then aver, that "what that *unprincipled* monarch thought the great evil of the Reformation," they "regard as one of its great blessings." The conduct of the Editor in the instance now complained of, exhibits a reverse picture of that of the "unprincipled monarch." *Political* reformation may be a "great blessing," but "to spy into abuses in *sacred* things," is to him a "sore evil under the sun."

Your readers are friends both of religious and civil liberty, and will admire consistency in their advocacy.

GEORGE HARRIS.

51, West Regent-Street, Oct. 29, 1833.

THE American Unitarian Association celebrated its Eighth Anniversary in Boston, on Tuesday, May 28, and by adjournment on Thursday, May 30. Rev. Dr. Bancroft, the President of the Institution, in the chair. The Reports of the Committees are highly interesting, as well as the addresses delivered by Revds. Dr. Bancroft, Parkman, Jason Whitman, Pierpont, Gannett, and F. O. Watts, Esq. These we are unable to insert entire in our present Number, and their effect would be injured by division. In our next we hope to give the substance of the Reports and the addresses. The office-bearers of the Association for this year, are:—

*President.*

Rev. Aaron Bancroft, D. D. of Worcester, Massachusetts.

*Vice-Presidents.*

Hon. Joseph Story, Mass.

Hon. Joseph Lyman, Mass.

Hon. William Sullivan, Mass.

Hon. C. H. Atherton, New Hampshire.

Hon. Stephen Longfellow, Maine.

Henry Wheaton, Esq. New-York.  
 James Taylor, Esq. Pennsylvania.  
 Henry Payson, Esq. Maryland.  
 Hon. W. Cranch, District of Columbia.  
 M. L. Hurlbut, Esq. Pennsylvania.  
 Hon. S. S. Wilde, Massachusetts.  
 Hon. S. Hoar, Jun. Massachusetts.  
 Thomas Flint, Esq. Ohio.

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*Directors.*

Rev. James Walker.  
 Rev. Ezra S. Gannett.  
 Rev. Alexander Young.  
 Rev. H. Ware, Jun. Foreign Secretary.  
 Rev. S. Barrett, Domestic Secretary.  
 Henry Rice, Esq. Treasurer.  
 Rev. Charles C. Sewall, General Agent.

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ON the 13th October, the Rev. Archibald Macdonald, at the request of the Scottish Unitarian Christian Association, preached three discourses in Aberdeen, in illustration and defence of the Oneness and universal benevolence of God. He was listened to with deepest attention by crowded audiences in the large hall of the Royal Hotel. In the evening, thousands could not gain admission. Every exertion was made by the clergy of the city, to prevent his preaching again, but the "Broad Hill" of Aberdeen was not within their bigoted dominion, and there he addressed thousands, on Sunday Oct. 20. At the urgent entreaty of numbers, he stayed another Sunday, and having obtained Cooke's Riding-school, preached to crowded audiences, and also on Thursday evening, Oct. 31. A Society has been formed. Most interesting are the particulars of the introduction of Christian Unitarianism into that large city. In our next Number we hope to enter into a full detail, and, in addition, to insert Mr. Harris's report, who it is hoped will spend two Sabbaths in Aberdeen in the course of December. In the meantime, our friends who have books and tracts to spare, could not devote them to a more useful purpose, than by presenting them to the Scottish Unitarian Christian Association, for circulation in Aberdeen and other towns in Scotland, where the desire to read Unitarian publications is very great.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS &amp; SUBSCRIBERS.

With gratitude for the aid we have received in conducting the Christian Pioneer, we now close our Seventh Volume. It is hoped that by their continued and increased support, the forthcoming Volume will be rendered still more influential in diffusing truth, and exciting to active efforts for the attainment of all that can dignify humanity. No labour will be spared on the part of the Editor, to make the Christian Pioneer the instrument of removing the corruptions of Christianity—the oppressions which have debased mankind, and the obstacles which have stayed the onward path to the improvement, liberty, and happiness of his race. Many alterations will be made in the general arrangement of the work, which it is hoped will be considered improvements.

Communications have already been received on Calvinism, its genuine doctrines, spirit, and tendency—the importance of diffusing knowledge throughout the community—Church Establishments—the early and rapid spread of Christianity—many publications for review, and newspapers from Ripon and Liverpool, for all of which our thanks are given.

## THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER

Commenced its labours in 1826. It was instituted to uphold and diffuse and carry forward the great principles of the Reformation—the sufficiency of Scripture, the right of individual judgment, and of fearless free inquiry; to uproot alike bigotry and indifference; to free the mind from slavish subjection to human authority in religion, and the heart from the contracting influences of sectarian feeling; to advocate the rights of man, and inculcate the duties obligatory on all human beings to truth, liberty, and virtue, their fellow-creatures and their God; and thus to herald the universality of knowledge, freedom, and happiness.

The Seven Volumes now completed, contain a fund of information on many of the most interesting subjects of thought. Nearly the whole of CHANNING's essays and sermons are contained in them—the whole proceedings in relation to the conflict for Christian liberty in the Synod of Ulster—vindications of the truth and divine origin of Christianity—criticism and explanation of various passages of the Bible—illustrations and defences of the peerless perfections, undivided Unity, and essential unbounded benevolence of God—interesting and powerful articles on Education, Church Establishments, Methodism, Slavery—memoirs of Newton, Locke, Abauzit, Lindsey, Firmin, Emlyn, Biddle—and a record of facts marking the spread of opinions favourable to the emancipation of the body and mind of man from ignorance, slavery, bigotry, and superstition, and the establishment of moral and intellectual, individual and national independence and blessedness.

*On the 1st of January, 1833,*

The First Number of Vol. VIII. of THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER will be published.

Its pages will be increased to *forty-eight* monthly, printed with an entirely new type and on improved paper. Should the sale continue to increase, the pages will be still further extended; but on no account will the price be raised above its present amount, *Sixpence* each Number.

Believing that the only basis of individual and social happiness is to be found in the doctrines, precepts, and spirit of Christianity—that it advances and harmonises with all improvement, and is the charter of liberty to every human being—THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER will continue, as it has hitherto done, to advocate its truths in their purity and benevolence—to contend earnestly for all that can elevate human nature, and secure to it the unfettered exercise and undisturbed enjoyment of those privileges and that happiness which the Father of mercies intended for all the children of his love.

It is hoped that every present Subscriber will endeavour to procure *one* in addition. Those who secure *twelve* shall receive a copy for themselves *gratis*. Information is requested to be addressed to the Editor, "Rev. GEORGE HARRIS, Glasgow," on or before the 12th December.

THE CHRISTIAN PIONEER is published on the first of every month, by R. HUNTER, 72 St. Paul's Church-yard; C. FOX, 67 Paternoster-Row; and J. MARDON, 19 St. Martin's le Grand, London. Communications, or books for review, both of which are respectfully solicited, sent to Mr. Hunter, before the last day of each month, will reach the Editor in a few days afterwards.

*Glasgow, 30th Nov. 1833.*













